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Lovely Woman

by ANGELA MORGAN

[*On seeing the bales and boxes piled on the sidewalk in a busy downtown district; the myriad shops; the endless procession of trucks and drays; the seething traffic.*]

That you shall be dressed in a gossamer gown,
With pearls for your fingers and plumes for your head;
That you shall be jeweled and pampered and fed
A thunder of traffic is heard in the town.
Oh! millions must work in the cold and the heat,
And thousands must suffer and many must die,
That you shall be charming and sweet to the eye
With beads for your bodice and silk for your feet.

To bring you a delicate veil for your face
The peace of the morning is shattered with noise;
That you shall have beauty and culture and poise
The city is robbed of its beauty and grace.
Oh, Bedlam is loose in the heart of the town
When bale upon bale from the caravan comes;
'Tis fiercer than armies and louder than drums . . .
That you shall be dressed in a gossamer gown!

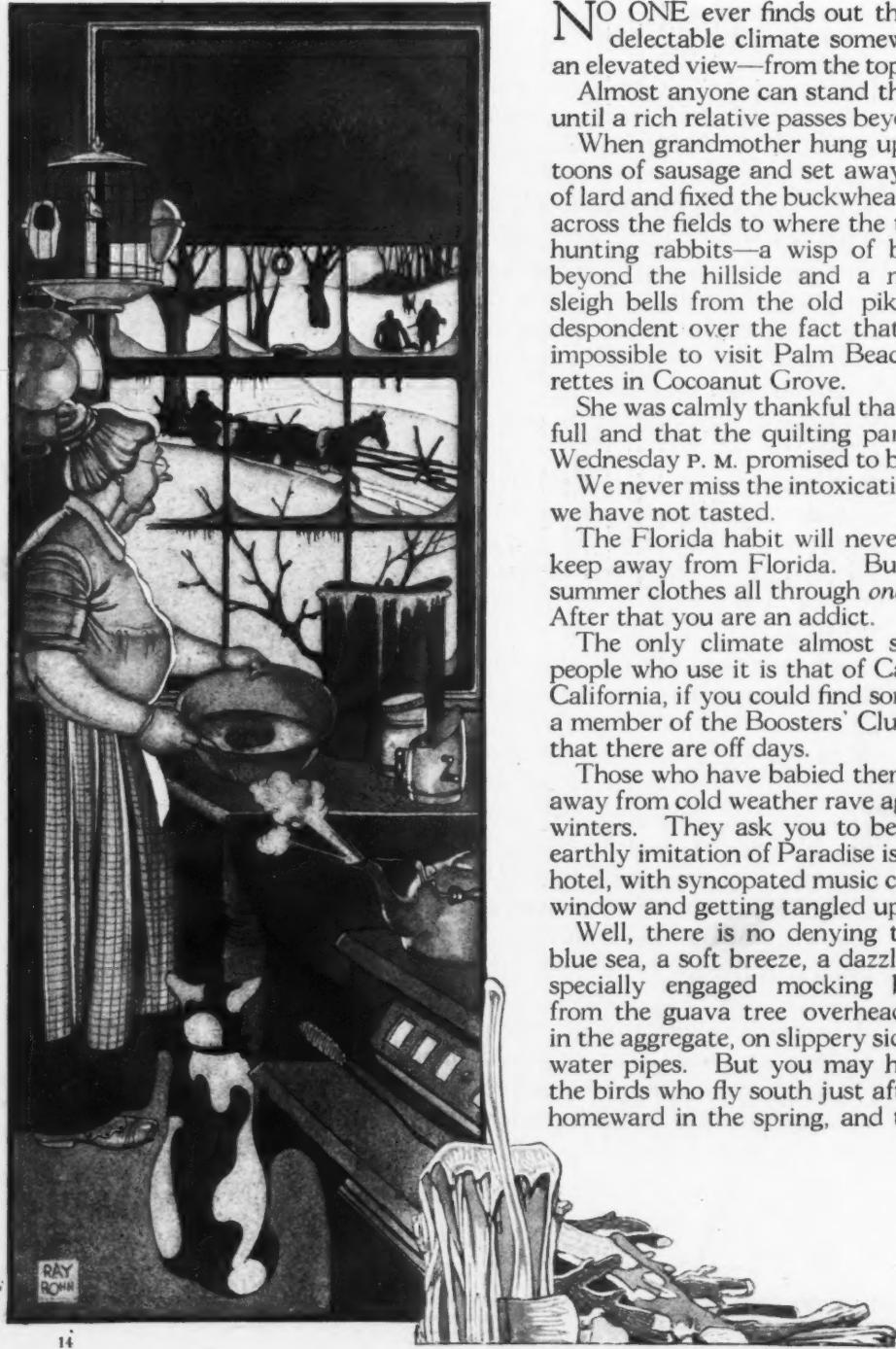
The sea is your servant, the forests obey
The wish of your heart or the wave of your hand;
The beasts of the jungle are yours to command,
The bird and the reptile forever your prey.
O mothers of men, who have suffered so much,
O women whose wrongs have been heavy and sore,
The whip of the centuries stings you no more,
The earth is your vassal and moves at your touch.

The earth is your vassal, to bring you renown,
And man is your slave, who shall do as you bid;
No longer your queenly inheritance hid,
You conquer the world in your gossamer gown!

GRANDMOTHER

Because She Never Had

By GEORGE ADE



NO ONE ever finds out that there is a more delectable climate somewhere until he gets an elevated view—from the top of a bank account.

Almost anyone can stand the northern winters until a rich relative passes beyond.

When grandmother hung up her gleaming festoons of sausage and set away her snowy crocks of lard and fixed the buckwheat batter and looked across the fields to where the trudging boys were hunting rabbits—a wisp of blue smoke arising beyond the hillside and a muffled rhythm of sleigh bells from the old pike—she never was despondent over the fact that she would find it impossible to visit Palm Beach and smoke cigarettes in Cocoanut Grove.

She was calmly thankful that the wood box was full and that the quilting party on the ensuing Wednesday P. M. promised to be a riotous success.

We never miss the intoxicating privileges which we have not tasted.

The Florida habit will never down you if you keep away from Florida. But if you ever wear summer clothes all through one winter—good by! After that you are an addict.

The only climate almost satisfactory to the people who use it is that of California. Even in California, if you could find someone who was not a member of the Boosters' Club, you might learn that there are off days.

Those who have babied themselves by running away from cold weather rave against our northern winters. They ask you to believe that the best earthly imitation of Paradise is a monster wooden hotel, with syncopated music coming out of every window and getting tangled up in the palms.

Well, there is no denying that a blue sky, a blue sea, a soft breeze, a dazzling sunshine and a specially engaged mocking bird, broadcasting from the guava tree overhead, have something in the aggregate, on slippery sidewalks and busted water pipes. But you may have observed that the birds who fly south just after the holidays fly homeward in the spring, and the early spring at

Got Through The WINTER Heard of PALM BEACH

Illustrations by Ray Rohn

that! They love their orange blossoms, bougainvilleas and poincianas, but you will always find them back, waiting around with the rest of us, to welcome the June roses.

The hymnist was away off when he described Heaven as a place where "never ending spring abides and never fading flowers." He was thinking of the other place. Take an apple-pie Yank and plant him in Manila and, after he has been there three years, he will burst into tears every time he thinks of frost on the windows and turkey on the table. He is fed up on never fading flowers. What he wants to see is a snow bank.

The best climate to settle down with is one which guarantees definite changes of season. It must be nerve-wearing to live in a perfumed bower which looks just the same on Christmas Day as on July Fourth.

Something like keeping house with a beautiful woman who wears the same gown 365 days in the year and never changes any of those trifling but intriguing ornaments which keep the party of the second part interested and expectant.

And where the weather is always the same, what do people find to talk about?

Nearly every Northerner you meet among the southern sunny seas, wearing a white suit, will give you free of charge a tall drink and his plans for getting back home.

The average ration of climate for 1923, in your neighborhood, is going to be pretty good.

There will be more bluebirds than blizzards.

For nine months the lonesome dwellers of the north woods will envy you. For a somewhat different total of nine months the residents of the sun-baked tropics will envy you. For a grand total of about four months you will envy either the people who live among the chilly pines or those who sit under awnings among the stifled islands of the south.

Cheer up! You have all the best of the book-keeping. Stop denouncing your home climate. It is really almost respectable.



THE SCENES OF
IRVIN COBB'S NEW STORY

One Block



PHOTOGRAPH BY
J. H. SCHNEIDER

"MEASURED by feet, the two avenues lie within the span of a sixth of a mile, roughly. Yet by all other standards they are a thousand miles apart. Three minutes of brisk walking takes you from one to the other but takes you also into a distant world; there's a Great Divide between them. One runs uptown into billions; the

From FIFTH AVENUE



© EWING GALLOWAY

other pours downtown into poverty. One lives on yellow-backs; the other thrives on pennies. One is whipped cream; the other mostly is what was left over when they got through with the skimming. Dives rides through one; Lazarus slouches along the other, panhandling as he goes."

A Story of a Girl from Back Home

One



Illustrations by C. D. Williams

WHIPPOORWILLVILLE is one of those places where the train stops twenty minutes for dinner and the passengers who take a chance have from ten to fifteen minutes to spare, depending on how game they are. This gives them a chance to see the business district. They can see it in five minutes, or four, if they hurry, which allows ample time for them to get back on board and start wondering what all the delay is about before the locomotive comes to and goes on about its business.

To give you a further idea: No set of souvenir postcards showing views in and around Whippoorwillville has yet been printed; and the popular excitement throughout the country caused by the Eskimo pie had practically abated nearly everywhere else in the South-Central states before it even reached here.

The town never had a boom. Its population increases very slowly and only because, as the vital statistics covering any healthful community will show, there are more births than there are deaths. Rarely does anything new go up, but occasionally something old falls down. In fact, Whippoorwillville is what you would call a finished town. Enlarging the fact, you might say it has been finished since the Civil War. The biggest thing that ever happened there was a clash between Union home guards and Confederate partisan rangers, raiding in for horses and recruits. This happened the fall after Fort Sumter was fired on, but the older citizens speak of it as though it had occurred within these past few months. But the biggest thing of recent years was when Letty Ember went to New York to prosecute her art studies in that great center of culture and artistic endeavor.

Letty Ember was Whippoorwillville's acknowledged child of genius. She was its only such, so naturally her going away made talk beforehand and left a void afterward. Herself, she could not remember when the urge of her gift first came to her. It was of record in the family that almost from her cradle days on she had been, as the word is, "different." While other little girls were playing lady-come-to-see and cutting out paper dolls she drew pictures of things and painted them with water colors.

A paint box containing an assortment of pale lozenge-looking slabs and some very limber camels' hair brushes with quills for

handles and two little mixing dishes like large white china buttons with the thread holes left out of them, was at six her most treasured possession. At school on Friday afternoons she was the one who was sent to the blackboard to write out mottoes and surround them with scrolls in red and white chalks. In a somewhat later period she won first prize at the Denton County Fair "for the best strictly original work of art executed by a resident of the county." Her offering was a study in oils—she had progressed by now to the stronger and more enduring medium—a fruit piece showing apricots, pears, grapes and a slice of an exceedingly ripe watermelon grouped on a marble slab. She was sixteen then and her father was postmaster under the second Wilson administration and they lived in one of the largest houses in town; the one with the two wooden cupolas on it and a railing around the roof, it being the same house which an architect from Boston, passing through on his way to Kansas City and seeing it from the car window, had said must certainly be the real Crime of 'Seventy-three.

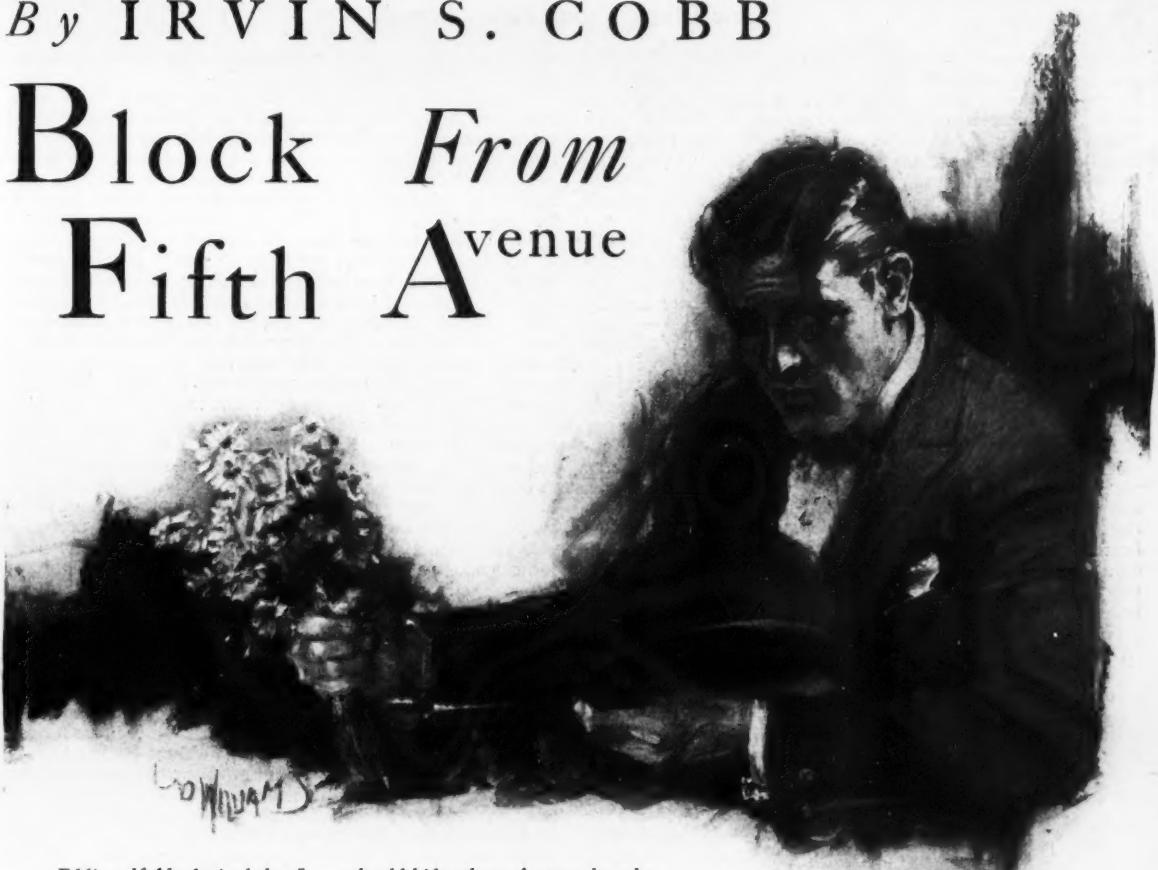
When this honor came to Letty Ember, bestirring her ambition for achievements yet higher, she absolutely was self-taught; had never had a lesson. Her father was forever saying that one of these days he was going to send Letty off somewhere to study under a regular professional painter. But he never got round to it. There were several things he never got quite round to—taking out more life insurance, for one thing, and cleaning the dead stock out of his drug store and putting in a soda fountain and paying off his notes in the Dentondale bank. Death caught up with him while he had all of these projects still vaguely in mind. Letty was just past twenty when diabetes overtook the loiterer.

Meanwhile, those four years between her sixteenth birthday and her twentieth had not been wasted. The walls of the Ember home attested her industry and her versatility. For the most part her canvases, enclosed in scrolled and shiny frames, were copies of what might be called standard subjects—Spearing Salmon on the Columbia River, the Monarch of the Glen, Our Darlings, the Grand Canal (Venice) at Sunset, Pompeian Flower Girl, Kittens at Play, Pharaoh's Chariot Horses.

She was that bad!

By IRVIN S. COBB

Block From Fifth Avenue



Eddie selfishly desired that Letty should bide where she was, but she told him her career must come first; to it she must sacrifice all else.

She was worse than that. She had no part of talent in her, but only a laborious knack for laborious imitation. Had there been in her a single smoldering little spark of the fire called inspiration she would somehow have guessed a way through her ignorance and the isolation, through her lack of craftsmanship even, to the rights of things. All about her were beauties that cried aloud in their loneliness for an artist to catch them and hold them in his webs of color—the neighborly foothills in wintertimes under snow; the jade-green river bottoms in the spring; the woods in the fall, with the hickories yellowing up and the ash purpling and the sour-gum dripping leaves like drops of blood where it had been bitten in Jack Frost's first attack; bits of dusty roadside of the summer, when the wilted mullein lolled out its furred tongues to show how poorly it stood the heat, and the "nigger-heads" brocaded the shoulders of the turnpike with golden epaulettes; dark types and town characters and awkwardly picturesque country folks; faces, shapes, figures; shadows and lights and moods—on every side, tendering themselves to her in a spendthrift prodigality. But she could not see them; the eyes of her soul were blinded to their wealth and their variety. Besides, there was nobody to tell her. So she went on desecrating ells of good cloth-weave with blobs of misused pigments. And Whippoorwillville's commonplace judgment held her as one favored beyond the ordinary daughters of ordinary men.

She went on so and thus until her father forevermore put aside all earthly consideration of those unstarted plans of his. Her mother already was dead. She was the mistress of her own acts thenceforward and the estate which had been left by the lately deceased was hers now to do with as she might devise. It was not much of an estate. When the funeral had been paid for and the just debts settled there was put into her hands a total amounting to slightly less than eleven hundred dollars. For the carrying out of her purpose she figured, though, it would be enough—if she stinted and stretched the pennies. To be sure, there was the heavy item of her consolidated entrance fees and her student dues for the first quarter; these would necessitate a seriously large outlay at the very beginning. But with her native abilities and her willingness to work hard she should go

ahead fast and go ahead far. For any immediate privations she would be bountifully repaid in a few months, or in a year or two, at most, when there came to her recognition, honors, reputé. You must excuse her for her vanity. For so far back as her memory ran she had been fed on the honest praise and honest loyalty of a community where local pride made up for many things lacking.

Naturally, Whippoorwillville, considered as a whole, approved of her decision. Eddie Sackett did not, it is true; but then, Eddie Sackett scarcely counted, he being as one against many. For his part, he selfishly desired that Letty should bide where she was and keep on being engaged to him. He wrote the Whippoorwillville Notes for the Dentondale Weekly Sun-Independent, which paid him six dollars a week, and he made fifteen dollars a week more as depot agent. He had prospects of a raise in salary; the railroad had shown signs of being not unmindful of faithful service and painstaking attention to details. On the enhanced income, he figured, two might live almost as cheaply as one. Married to him, Letty could go on with her painting; on his word of honor he pledged himself to it.

But she had read somewhere that domestic life was crippling, nearly always, to a successful art'stic career, a clog on the winged foot of genius. She had visions of herself in a noble high studio fronting canvases of great price. With this vision were interwoven other delectable pictures in which she invariably was the main and central figure—the pet of the Four Hundred, accepting commissions from distinguished and worshipful patrons; taking medals at the Academy; cooking chafing dish suppers in a vastly becoming smock for guests recruited from the aristocracy of Bohemia; queening it at artists' revels. This conglomerate vision came swiftly between her and the present sight of Eddie's hurt, grieving face; his counter-arguments were lost in the rolling of great drums. She told him her chosen work must come first; to it she must sacrifice all else—or at least for the next few years she must. She owed it to herself; she owed it to her art.

For art's sake she already had decided to alter the spelling of her name. As Letitia she had been christened, Letty she had been called, but Leatrice she would hereafter be, both to her friends

One Block From Fifth Avenue

and to the general public. It was a name she had found in a moving picture magazine. Immediately she had been drawn to it; she felt that it fitted. And he, in his journalistic capacity, might, if agreeable to him, be the medium of advertising the change to the world at large. Leatrice—the very estate and sound of it seemed somehow to emphasize to him the depth and the width of the gulf opening between them. But he promised.

So Eddie, taking his bruised heart off his sleeve and putting it back in his breast to ache intolerably there, wrote for the top item of his weekly column one beginning: "All Whippoorwillville and vicinity are agog this week over the forthcoming departure of Miss Leatrice Ember, of here, rarely gifted daughter of the estimable late Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Ember, for the teeming metropolis of Greater New York City where she will—" and so forth and so on, twenty-odd lines of it, concluding with the ringing summary: "Our loss is Gotham's gain!"

He meant it, too, his valedictory flourish. You see, touching on Letty's future, Eddie had no doubts. Here at least he was in confident accord with his fellow Whippoorwillvillians. This was what made the parting all the harder for him—this sincere conviction that he was giving her up forever. You cannot hitch your depot agent to a star, and down in his soul Eddie knew it and by such knowledge was desolated utterly. Sense of an eternal loss drooped his shoulders as he walked across the echoing boards of the platform and into his little rabbit hutch of a station on a given date after Number Seven, east-bound, due in at six twenty-two, due out at six twenty-four, had pulled away, bull's-eyeing straight into the round red target of sun-up.

Number Seven was carrying her off to join an innumerable caravan which journeys to besiege a heaven-piercing city of admirable desires. It is a caravan that is formed of youth. Its baggage train is loaded with hopes. The quick march of optimism briskens its processional step. Blithe old General Ego rides on ahead, in full command. But ultimately—of course, there has to be an ultimately, else many folks would never wake up from their day-dreaming at all—the long casualty lists of disillusionment and despair will claim most of the names on this army's muster roll. Pardon me if I seem here to overstress

the hyperbole; maybe I have been reading too many moving picture sub-titles lately.

Even so, facts are facts, no matter what fine feathers of language you dress them up in. And it is a fact that New York is a place of immortal rewards and terrific mortality averages. But quoting percentage sheets never yet turned back a stripling's pilgrimage. You might just as well hang a *Keep off the Grass* sign on an oasis and expect the famished travelers from across the burning sands to read it and heed it and head back for home.

Just then, floundering about for metaphor, I said Eddie Sackett's beloved went, that morning, to join a certain caravan. Rather, I should have called it a children's crusade, for that precisely is what it is—a children's crusade recruited from the deep ranks of inexperience. The girl who sang so much better than the rest of 'em in the village choir; the youngster who made a sweepstakes of it in the crossroads class of elocution; the born hewers of wood, the predestined drawers of water, who nevertheless yearn to hew the dumb marble into lines of sculptured life and draw deathless pictures for a reverent posterity; a whole generation of mute, inglorious Miltons, aspiring to be mute no longer nor yet inglorious; young hallucinationists who diagnose as the pang of thwarted creation what really is the growing pains of their own mediocrity; auto-intoxicated adolescents mistaking the illusions of self-deception for a hankering after self-expression—by the dozen and the gross and the great gross they move on the city. Their going thither stands for dollars saved through patient sacrifice, for mortgages put on homesteads by flattered parents, for slender patrimonies to be spent, more often than not, on a vain quest.

You merely would be wasting your breath, though, did you, being wiser, try to warn the majority of them that inevitably and lamentably it must prove to be, for them, the very vainest of all possible quests. They are armored against your warnings in confidence which, so many times, is only another name for conceit. Why should they listen to you? There, at her harbor's head, sits New York, the magic town. By virtue of a witchcraft resident in her New York is going to provide them with those precious elements which, until now, through no inherent fault of theirs, they have been denied. It is New York that will make noble swans out of all little awkward goslings, that will turn these drab sparrows of the hedgerow into birds of paradise, that is craving to graft the notes of the nightingale upon the feeble larynx of the sandpiper. New York with its opportunities, its advantages, its instinct for recognition; New York with its schools of applied design, its schools of interior decorating, its schools of the dramatic arts and the plastic and the graphic; its schools of expression, its schools of voice culture and of music; its schools of making finished moving picture actors right out of the raw material—New York will somehow turn the trick. Good old appreciative, generous, discerning, observing, discovering New York!

So the stage-smitten amateurs who have neither grace nor personality but only a pale mimetic quality come hurrying to her embrace. And would-be writers of embroidered tales, who lack in imagination, in perception, in all sense for the right weight and the right color of words—they come along, too. And the boy whom a niggardly nature designed with intent that he should spend his maturer years making neat blue stripes on the red



Technique was all Letty needed to land her at the very top of the profession. Professor Beckermann told her so himself.

spokes of new farm wagons—he comes. The trouble with him is he thinks he has been called into this earth to paint rings around the Old Masters. And with him mayhap comes his sister. But her happy delusion is that, concealed somewhere about her trivial person, are the sweeping forces of a queen of tragedy.

They have gone as far as they could go in their restricted environment. Circumscribed and secluded as they have been, they nevertheless have felt the urge. They have triumphed above cramping circumstance; they have outgrown the small towns; behold, they have broken the bars. Surely, with the ambition that is in them and the feel of latent power that stirs them, they must go high and far there in New York where the horizons are so broad; where atmosphere and association make for development; where the producing manager stalks for hidden talent in the highway and fame is hiding around every corner eager to pounce forth and tag any unknown juvenile phenomenon.

But the truth is that New York is an Iron Maiden that takes them in her arms only to crack their young bones and press out their blood. The reputable schools, the honest teachers, weed them out, keeping those who give promise of making dependable craftsmen, banning the rest. Some, discouraged at the outset and homesick and daunted by the chill indifference of the town, return whence they came. They are, by odds, the luckier of those who are discarded. Others, as yet unhumbled and more persistent in their belief in themselves, fall into the maws of sharks who ply a shark's trade of imposture and fakery on the marshy verges of the arts; and it is the lot of these victims to be carried along by cajolery and deceit and false guidance until they have been stripped of their savings; then, eventually, to be cast adrift. Here and there is one who, by reason of having real merit, wins and wins magnificently. The name of such a one is advertised to all the land. But the losers are not advertised. And only God Almighty knows what an annual bumper crop there is of the losers—that same compassionate Almighty who hearkens to the heartbroken sobs of some poor child alone, except for Him, in a hall bedroom, three floors up and all the way back, with her head buried in the slimsy pillows to shut out the hateful face of failure. But if her Maker did not graciously deign to plant the seeds of genius in her when He put her forth into the world, how can even He now piece together the scraps of her paltry, shattered little dream? Sooner or later, every Whippoorwillville sends its Letty Ember to the City.

But our present concern is with our own particular Letty Ember from this particular Whippoorwillville. Promptly, to Eddie and to others as well, she wrote back letters that mainly were punctuated with exclamation points; about every fifth word was heavily underscored. New York was so wonderful—three black lines for emphasis under the *so* and a big "!" to finish with. Photographs and souvenir views and printed descriptions did not begin to do it justice—it must be seen to be appreciated! One felt that in New York one could breathe, could expand, could grow! Surely one would never have time to get blue or faint spirited here with so much to see and so much to do and such splendid goals to work toward!

True, there had been one small vexation at the outset. She had not been able to get into the Art Students' League, as she had counted on doing. It seemed the classes were all full at present; but to offset this she had had a perfectly glorious piece of luck. She had been so fortunate as to be brought into contact with a Professor Beckermann, a very distinguished foreign painter, who took for his pupils only such beginners as had recognizable talent. He had condescended to look at those typical examples of her work which she had brought along to show what she could do. And he had been so enthusiastic over them, so sure of her ultimate triumph! Indeed, he had con-



Already Whippoorwillville seemed to Letty a million miles away.

sented to take her on for a series of private lessons. She was to call him "Master"; all his scholars called him "Master"! Under him she would have individual attention, while at the Art League she merely would have been one of a group. He had explained to her the eminent advantages of this over the class system. It was bound to be a tremendous help to her; she would go forward so much faster than otherwise she could hope to go. And Professor Beckermann was so picturesque, so unconventional in dress and manner, so charmingly Bohemian! With him, surroundings seemed to count for nothing; he lived solely for his art. And he had technique at his very finger tips! And technique was all that she needed to land her at the very top of the profession. He had told her so himself. Wasn't she the lucky girl?

It must be confessed that living was very dear in New York. Everything cost ever so much more than the same thing would



Miss Devore uttered what was at once a defiance, a triumphant pronouncement and,

cost back home. And, of course, it was not to be expected that anyone, let alone a little stranger from the country, should have the benefit of the Master's skill and knowledge without paying for it. But putting up with a few discomfits now only meant that supreme success would be coming all the sooner. Good by, and give her love to everybody. Already, Whippoorwillville seemed a million miles away. She was, in conclusion, Fondly, Leatrice.

Those first letters came in a white flock. It was as though she desired that at once and at first hand all her friends should know from her how promising the outlook was and how determined she was that they, who were so very proud of her, should never be disappointed in her. Later, there was a space—a very blank space for Eddie Sackett—when she did not write. To himself Eddie strove manfully to find excuses for her silence. She must be terribly busy; he could appreciate what heavy demands New York must be making upon her, socially and otherwise. Still, if only about once in so often—say, once every two weeks—she could steal the time to send him a line, that certainly would help him to bear the separation better. He kept on writing to her.

Finally a letter from her did come. It would appear that since he last heard from her there had been certain changes in her plans. For one thing, she had about decided, temporarily at least, to take up commercial designing—posters for advertisements and trade illustrations, etc., etc., etc.; she had been given to understand that these things paid very well. This, of course, did not mean that she had lost interest in her more serious work. That always would be her real forte. But she merely

thought of adding on the other for the time being, as a sort of sideline. She did not mention Professor Beckermann in connection with this venture. In fact, she did not mention him at all this time; presumably he was to be taken for granted. Also she had another important piece of news: Eddie would be interested to hear that she no longer was staying in that stuffy, crowded old boarding house on west Fifty-seventh Street. She had rented "bachelor girl quarters" farther downtown, so that she might have her workshop right there in her own snug, quiet little housekeeping apartment. She was now—just think of it—in the very heart of the city, only one block from Fifth Avenue! And Eddie, of course, knew what Fifth Avenue was—the street of the most fashionable shops and the most exclusive clubs, with some of the largest hotels and lots of the leading theaters within easy walking distance. She thought it would be rather nice if Eddie would be so good as to write one of his pieces, mentioning this fact, for the Denton Sun-Independent. Everybody in Whippoorwillville and probably a lot of other people in Denton County would be thrilled to hear where she had moved to. That is to say, he need not give the exact address which she now sent him; it would be sufficient if he stated that her present location was just one block from Fifth Avenue, with all its life and gaiety. (Signed) Affectionately, Leatrice.

Eddie did as requested. He was proud to do it and Whippoorwillville was proud to read the tidings. He sent on the printed clipping of what he wrote in his next letter, which went forward three days later, immediately after the current week's issue of the paper came out. In the letter he rather betrayed his private



yes—a prayer: "And still they's some'll say they ain't no God!"

feelings. He admitted to deep regret that she seemed to be forgetting those at home who cared for her; at least, she certainly was neglecting them so far as the United States mails were concerned. He appreciated the difference in their relative positions these days—he plodding along in a poky little backwoods hole, she going ahead so rapidly in the artistic circles of Greater New York City. But with all that, he still only could trust and pray that she would not entirely cease to remember those happy days gone by which they had spent together. Eddie could do some underscoring himself when the occasion called for it.

A month later he got a scrap of a letter from her—no more than a dozen lines on one side of a half-sheet of note paper. Reading it, he judged that some little thing must have upset her. It ran like this:

Eddie Dear—I have not forgotten you. I'm not going to forget you. Nearly all the time these days I think of you and of those who really cared for me formerly and believed in me. Oh, Eddie, I couldn't ever go back home if I failed, could I? Oh, Eddie, it's awful hard sometimes to keep on being brave when you're all by yourself nearly always. I don't suppose there's any place where a person can get to be as lonely as they are in a big city. Letty

Eddie decided she must have been very much upset indeed to forget that her name now was Leatrice. Well, the weather had been terribly hot all the week in Whippoorwillville. It must have been hot in New York, too. Maybe it was the weather that had got on her nerves.

He carried the letter about with him, reading it frequently and puzzling over it. It was the last letter he had from her. He was regularity itself, though—never let a week pass without writing.

One block from Fifth Avenue is Sixth. Now in New York, as has been stated by someone with almost an Old Testamental value of the strength of the repetitive, there are streets and streets. There are streets such as you may see in any one of half a dozen seaboard cities; and there are streets which in all main essentials might as well be the streets which parallel them. Parts of Eighteenth Street could be blended into Twenty-eighth or Thirty-eighth and nobody would mark the difference because there wouldn't be any difference to mark; the materials would match. Avenue A and Avenue B are twins. I know a stretch in Tenth Avenue which seems to have been copied, with a rare fidelity, from a stretch in Eleventh.

Then again there are streets such as you'll find nowhere else; streets which, having each one its own special individuality, are never by any chance to be confounded with any other streets there or elsewhere. They are the lines of character in the face of the city.

Take Wall Street; that's a deep wrinkle of avarice in Manhattan's lower jaw. Take Riverside Drive. On second thought, don't; it already has been taken by gas tanks, billboards, the New York Central tracks and miles of the homeliest apartment houses on this footstool—a natural glory spoiled by squatter sovereignty. Take Broadway, which in the nighttime is a broad yellow streak down the spine of the town but which by day is seen to be dying of the same disease that killed the Bowery—over-advertisement. Take the Bowery, smelling of stale memories, a stiff in a dirty winding sheet. Take Fifth Avenue if you can afford it. And take Sixth when you can afford nothing else. She's guaranteed not to be too rich for your blood.

Measured by feet, they lie within the span of a seventh of a mile, roughly.

Yet by all other standards they are a thousand miles apart. Three minutes of brisk walking takes you from one to the other but takes you also into a distant world; there's a Great Divide between them. Fifth Avenue always is avowedly herself. With clumpings here and there of big shops and hotels, bits of Sixth Avenue achieve a localized imitation of the rich sister—Cinderella trying on the silver slipper. But, mainly, Sixth Avenue keeps her own personality, too, and frankly is what Fifth might have been if Fifth hadn't had nearly all the luck in the family. Fifth is the front show window; Sixth is the alley fence at the back. Even their currents flow contrariwise. Fifth runs up-town into billions; Sixth pours downtown into poverty. One lives on yellowbacks; the other thrives on the pennies. Fifth comes springing out of Washington Square to sweep irresistibly northward; Sixth goes sliding south from the haggard and consumptive trees of Central Park to lose itself finally in some most dismal labyrinths of the Lower West Side. A dollar doesn't get you anywhere at all on Fifth; on Sixth a thin dime gives you a fair run for your money. One is whipped cream; the other mostly is what was left over when they got through with the skimming. Dives rides through Fifth; Lazarus slouches along Sixth, panhandling as he goes. Multiply the similes for as long as pleases you; every time you'll get the same result.

A proper studio should have a north light. But the window in the room of this artist looked eastward. There was only the one window; the wall breadth could not have accommodated two and still leave a place for the head of (Continued on page 141)



The PARIS of My Dreams

Illustration by

THERE is a delightful comic opera clatter and bang to a Paris morning. It arises from sleep with song as naturally as the pine springs to the sun.

Down in the hallway the concierge is opening and slamming doors. His wife trills over the morning skillet. The butcher boy's dog yips a joyous greeting.

In the narrow back streets the huckster is tooting his raucous roundelay.

Around the corner a group of singing students are on their way to onion soup—the last lap of a night of revelry. A gendarme steps out from shelter, plucks his silken mustache, gives a hitch to his shoulder cape, shrugs and turns away.

Early workers are singing and whistling on their way. From the boulevards, a-crawl with kitten-power taxis, comes the incessant squeak of horns. Paris is awake.

Old men with their market baskets gesticulate wildly on the sidewalk. Parks ring with childish shouts. Tourists swarm about the boulevard tables. Little shops ripple with morning trade. A nightmare of materialism—radiant, effervescent. Paree! Paree!

Along the Boulevard des Capucines amid the delirium of the noontime rush, traffic clotted. A black hearse with an oval mirror halted at the curb.

Detaching herself from the crowd, a laughing *midinette* carrying her showy milliner's box moved up to the mirror, powdered her cheeks, brightened her lips and swept onward.

She is the spirit of Paris. Blithe, vain and smiling at the shadows.

Paris is hiding its scars. Torn, ravaged, it still laughs and loves with the lightness of its champagne foam.

It may be as fickle as the smiles of its courtesans, but I tell you it is the ideal spot to play, the hole in the garden wall where one may hide one's grief.

More than ever is it pitching its gaiety to the highest tempo, caring not for the day or hour but only for the moment.

Purple pasts fade spotlessly white in the eternal present. The ear is not attuned to gossip.

What matter if the lady in an international marriage was once "registered" at the Café de Paris?

That is a matter that Paris applauds.

The worldly adventuress runs her gamut of liaisons and settles down at a peaceful villa in wedded respectability. And not a tongue wags.

The rich dowager takes her foppish *amant* to tea at the Ritz, openly pays the check and at night sits with her husband at the opera in a halo of domestic bliss.

In a castle along the Bois lives the demimondaine. She has unlimited credit at the smartest shops and lolls in the perfumed languor of her especially built motor. Head waiters bestow their lowest bow.

And that is why Paris, despite its terraced loveliness, architectural grandeur, spacious parks and ribbon-smooth boulevards, smacks of a certain ugliness.

I talked to a Frenchman at a sidewalk table in front of the Café de la Paix—that historic corner restaurant where all the world drifts by. Sipping his *chocolat*, he was thrilling to the wonders of his city.

In the same breath that he described the beauty of the Arc de Triomphe he whispered the lure of the famous brothel, "The House of All Nations."

Contrast tumbles breathlessly upon contrast in this amazing Paris. It teems with lights and shadows.

In twenty minutes by motor one may be whisked from a den of throat-slitting Apaches to some tiny village, like a Callot engraving, with hens pecking and cocks crowing before the doors.

There are scarred inns with creaking signboards swinging in the wind and little farms with dovecotes, barns and sheepfold. And at the turn in the road frightful shell holes epitomizing the German fury.

One motors up to the breath-taking beauty of the palace gates at Versailles to learn that yesterday 10,000 curious stood all night in a drizzling rain to see a Bluebeard's head drop in a basket.



b y O . O . M c I N T Y R E

Wallace Morgan

The Rue de la Paix, that short strip of fashion center, crackles with light and beauty. A few steps away one turns into the Rue de Rivoli to behold a frightful figure at a sidewalk table. He has long matted hair and beard and snips silhouettes with a deformed hand that has but two fingers. And his venerable body is swathed in crêpe.

In mid-afternoon, when the sun-dappled Champs Elysées is gayest with strollers, the chattering crowds sweep up to the arch, suddenly hush and tiptoe away. The specter is there—the freshly kept grave of the unknown soldier.

Even in that magic hour when the Champs is at its best with the parade of fashion, the blare of bands, the gaily caparisoned broughams flashing by, there is the feeling that it is only tinsel that hides a bleeding heart—a brooding tragedy wearing the mask of the mime.

I asked a Frenchman about this.

"What you sense, my friend," he said, "is that no matter how gay our people are, far off they hear the faint rattle of muskets."

Swinging from the shadows to the lights—from tragedy to jazz.

At four in the afternoon when sleepy eyed Montmartre awakens to slink to the cafés for bracers, the fun begins. Every café is featuring jazz. Art Hickman is cheered along the streets.

The darky who can syncopate is a figure. In his off moments he occupies choice tables in the best cafés. He promenades the boulevards with ravishingly beautiful Parisian belles.

France is quite fascinated by the American negro. His stock soared higher when a negroid featured Senegalese battered Gorgeous Georges almost beyond repair. The boulevards ring with "Vive le Siki!"

It is typical of the French to seize every opportunity to idolize. It helps them forget.

An American negro from Birmingham who sells newspapers in the Place de l'Opéra wears a silk hat, white spats and carries a cane.

"Hot diggedy dog!" he exclaimed. "This town is sho'ly the cat's vest. Colored folks is quality."

At the American bar, a New York singer, who sang in the back room of Kelly's on Houston Street, was a season sensation. His name went up in electric lights a few steps from the fashionable Rue de la Paix.

Paris *elegantes* flocked to hear a pale-faced youth with wistful voice sing of Kansas City Kitty and Montmartre Rose. A blond coon shouter reigns at the Acacia. So it goes.

The Montmartre café life is a cross-section lifted from old Broadway—the same faces, the same settings. Only at sunrise do the doors of night close.

I sing of Paris "wickedness" for sightseers. What a sham it is. In downtown streets the professional guides whisper to strangers of "The Mystery Dance" and "The Dawn Soirée."

Sure that they are held in dank cellars on the left bank of the Seine, they are not different from the hoochie dancers that village constables drive from the circus lots.

Paris "wickedness" is staged like that of New York's Chinatown for the wide-eyed yapwagon riders.

The real vices of Paris are gilded and are not for the bourgeoisie. No visitor can withstand the supreme beauty of a Paris night—the perfumed loveliness of the Tuilleries, the etching of Eiffel Tower against the plush of night, the shadowy dignity of the Bois and that oddly mysterious hush that comes to the streets.

When the faint flush of morning is hung in Paris skies, there comes the rhythmic throb of hoofbeats like the rise and fall of a fountain.

Toward the market moves the age-old cavalcade of creaking carts, piled high with carrots, cabbages and cauliflower—the peasant drivers nodding on their perches.

From the Tuilleries Gardens a plumed bird circles low and with a glad cry wings upward toward the dawn.

Again, the delightful clatter and bang.

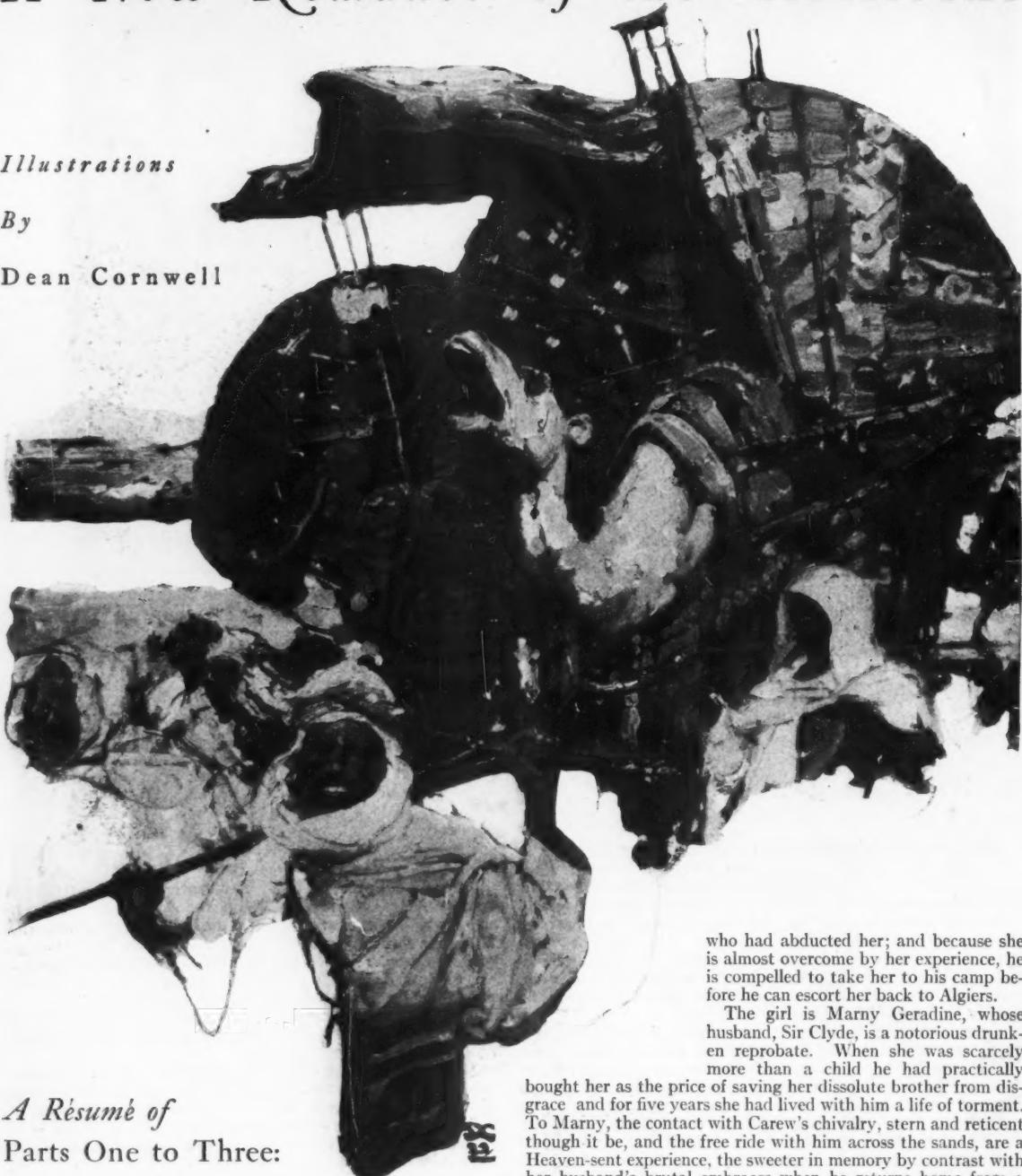
Paris is awakened to another glorious day.

A New Romance of the SAHARA

Illustrations

By

Dean Cornwell



A Résumé of Parts One to Three:

CALLED El Hakim—the Desert Healer—by the Arabs, among whom he is a beloved figure, Sir Gervas Carew is a man of mystery to the European colony of Algiers. Years before the young wife he worshiped had run off with an Austrian count, leaving Carew's infant son dying; and the double tragedy had made of him a misogynist distrusting and despising all women. He had come to Algeria to blot out memory in ministering tirelessly to the medical needs of the desert Arabs, whose dress he wore and whose wild life he lived with his faithful attendant Hosein and his adopted protégé, the blind waif Saba. Because he was implicitly trusted by the Arabs, he was able incidentally to perform certain delicate diplomatic services for the French government, by whom he was held in high regard.

One night all the old wounds of remembrance he had thought healed are torn open when, riding alone toward his camp at Blidah, he is startled by a woman's screams for help. In a fierce combat he rescues her from an outcast Arab, Abdul el Dhib,

who had abducted her; and because she is almost overcome by her experience, he is compelled to take her to his camp before he can escort her back to Algiers.

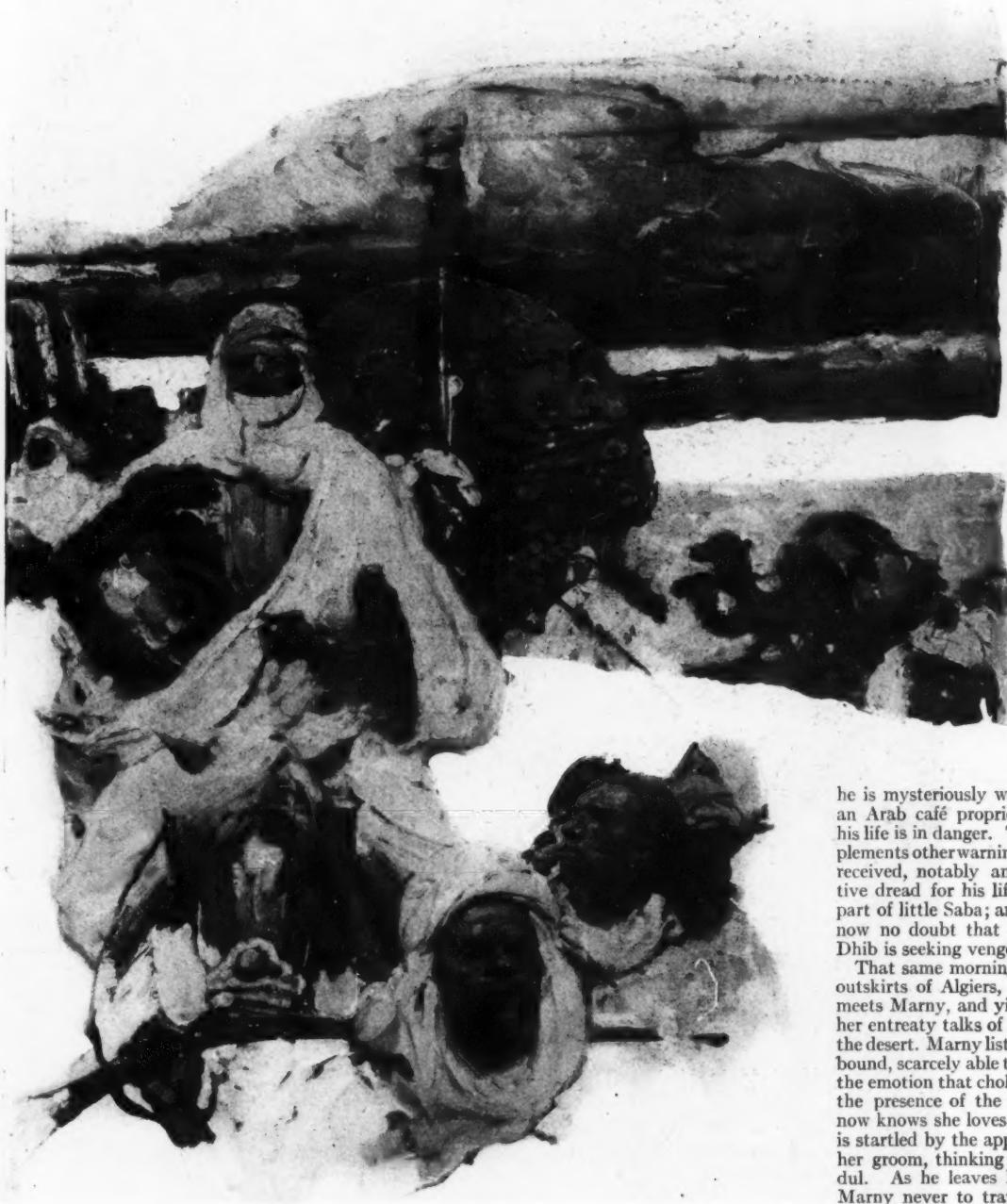
The girl is Marny Geradine, whose husband, Sir Clyde, is a notorious drunken reprobate. When she was scarcely more than a child he had practically bought her as the price of saving her dissolute brother from disgrace and for five years she had lived with him a life of torment. To Marny, the contact with Carew's chivalry, stern and reticent though it be, and the free ride with him across the sands, are a Heaven-sent experience, the sweeter in memory by contrast with her husband's brutal embraces when he returns home from a hunting trip next day. Even though she thinks Carew an Arab because of his native garb, she realizes she is well-nigh in love with him.

Shortly afterwards, as Carew is returning from a visit to a sheik in Algiers, he again meets Marny, who had lost her way in the native quarter. This time he saves her from a gang of Arab gamins, from whose tormenting attentions she had tried to rescue a stray dog. Carew is now in European dress and she is startled to find him an Englishman. For his part he is more deeply and unwillingly stirred than ever by this second encounter; and he leaves her with a purposely brusque farewell. For days, indeed, he had been unable to thrust her from his thoughts, and from the Governor he had learned something of the character of her husband.

That night, at the opera with the Governor, Carew sees Geradine for the first time and the man at once arouses in him an instinctive and murderous hatred which he is at a loss to understand.

By E.^{dith} M.^{aude} HULL, who wrote "*The SHEIK*"

The Desert Healer



Carew's days are now an emotional turmoil, with the picture of Marny constantly before him. To forget, he contemplates an expedition to the mysterious and hostile City of Stones; but he is forced to postpone this because General Sanois, commander of the French Algerian forces, urgently requests that he undertake an expedition of another kind on behalf of the government. Impatiently awaiting the completion of arrangements, Carew goes to his Blidah camp. Returning from it one morning,

he is mysteriously warned by an Arab café proprietor that his life is in danger. This supplements other warnings he had received, notably an instinctive dread for his life on the part of little Saba; and he has now no doubt that Abdul el Dhib is seeking vengeance.

That same morning, on the outskirts of Algiers, he again meets Marny, and yielding to her entreaty talks of his life in the desert. Marny listens spell-bound, scarcely able to conceal the emotion that chokes her in the presence of the man she now knows she loves. Carew is startled by the approach of her groom, thinking it is Abdul. As he leaves he warns Marny never to travel away from Algiers unescorted.

Part Four: CHAPTER VI

IT WAS late in the afternoon when Carew rode into Algiers to keep the appointment made over the telephone that morning.

At the moment General Sanois was living in barracks and Carew found him in his private room sitting alone before a huge desk that was heaped with a mass of papers. At



With growing hatred and disgust Carew listened to the uninterrupted flow of evil language. Was

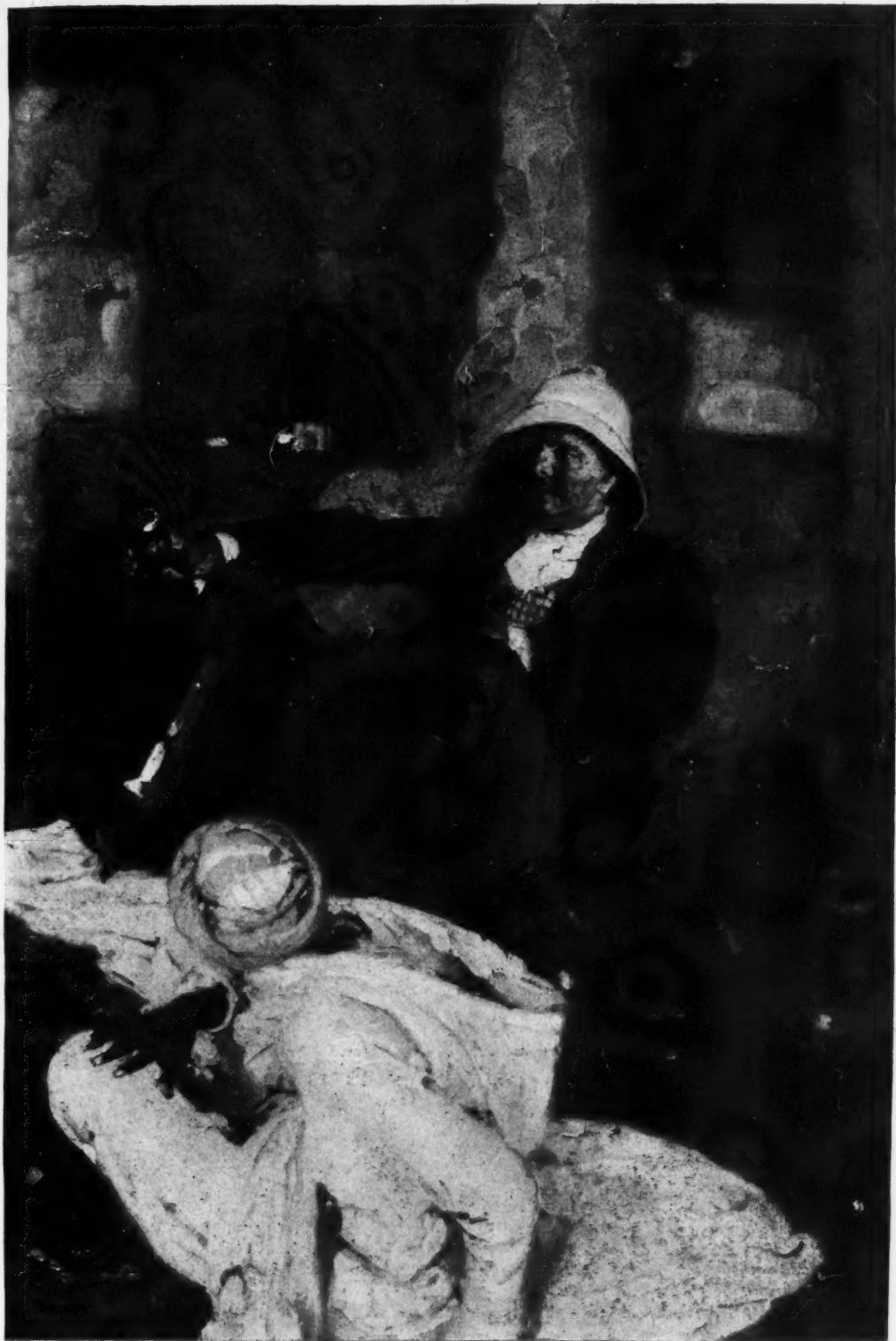
his entrance the General rose and held out a welcoming hand.

"Well," he said eagerly, "you have decided?" and sank back into his chair with a little exclamation of satisfaction as Carew nodded affirmatively.

"You relieve me of a difficulty, *mon cher*," he went on, pushing papers and telephone on one side to make room for the map he

spread out with almost affectionate care. "I was at my wits' end to find a substitute. My own men are no use; an officer would never get past the frontier. I think I shall not be wrong in saying that you will not fail," he added confidently.

Carew smiled faintly at the implied compliment, which he



this what the girl heard day after day and night after night? He scowled at the sudden thought.

knew to be no idle one but a genuine expression of opinion.

"I'll do my best," he said briefly, with a slight shrug of embarrassment; "but I am not infallible," he added, "and if I fail?"

"You will at least have had a charming excursion," cut in Sanois laughingly.

Carew hitched the folds of his heavy burnous closer round him and drew his chair nearer to the table.

"I am ready to start almost at once. My own preparations can be concluded in a week. I am anxious to get out of Algiers, and if you keep me waiting indefinitely—well, then I can't promise that when you want me you

The Desert Healer

"will find me." He smiled at Sanois's whistle of dismay. "A week?" he said rather doubtfully. "You don't give us much time, my friend. But I'll do what I can. And now to business."

When the details of the expedition had been discussed in every particular and Carew rose at last to go, night had fallen.

The air was strangely soft, heavy with the scent of flowers, and a brooding silence that was reminiscent of the solemn hush of the desert seemed to have closed down over all nature. Not a tree moved, not a dog barked, and Carew had the curious feeling that he was riding through a place of the dead. Amongst the Arabs it was an omen of death, a sure and certain sign that for some human soul the wings of Azrael were beating downward from the realms of the blessed. For his? With a philosophical shrug he turned in the saddle to look back at the newly risen moon, a crescent slip of silver hanging low in the east, and then sent Suliman flying in the direction of his villa.

In the Moorish hall, brilliantly lighted by three large hanging lamps of beaten silver, Saba was waiting. And as his sensitive ears caught the almost imperceptible sound of soft leather against the marble pavement, he darted forward with a wild cry of joy and fell, laughing and sobbing together, into the arms stretched out to catch him. Tossing him up on his shoulder Carew carried him, chattering with excitement, through the jasmine-scented courtyard to the big bedroom at the back of the house, there to cope with a flow of endless questions. The boy continued to chatter throughout the length of the formal dinner served by Derar and Hosein.

Though preferring the simplicity of camp life, Carew in his town house followed early traditions and maintained a certain state and ceremony. But this evening he glanced about him once or twice during the protracted meal with a faintly puzzled look in his somber eyes. What made the room tonight appear so empty—so chill and lifeless? It was not the lack of guests that troubled him—he was used to being alone—but a strange yearning for something he was at a loss to define. Was it the preliminary warning of middle age that, urging a remembrance of his forty years, had induced the unaccustomed feeling of lassitude and melancholy that seemed to have taken hold of him? He almost laughed at the thought.

Calling to Saba, he went out on to the wide veranda that overlooked the garden.

For a while he smoked in a silence that was punctured at intervals by the blind boy's fitful remarks, to which he replied briefly with an inattention that was not lost upon his small companion, for gradually he too fell silent.

The night was very still. Directly before the veranda a broad streak of moonlight stretching like a path of silver to the distant boundary wall made blacker the darkness that enveloped the rest of the garden, where trees and flowering shrubs loomed large and fantastic in the murky gloom. The heavy scent of flowers was almost overpowering, languorous and sleep-inducing as the smell of incense. And the brooding hush that Carew had noticed earlier in the evening seemed now even more penetrating and intense. He was not given to imagination, but he could not rid

himself of the impression of a coming calamity that momentarily made him more wide awake and alert. With the sense of waiting there came again the feeling of depression and melancholy he had experienced during dinner. How empty and lonely the house had seemed! He had never noticed it before. Why did he notice it now?

As he pondered it there seemed to rise before him the semblance of a figure standing in the brilliant strip of moonlight; a slender, graceful figure whose boyish riding dress no longer moved him to intolerant disgust. For an instant he stared almost with fear at the delicate oval face that appeared so strangely close to his, looking straight into the pain-filled, haunting eyes that seemed to be tearing the very heart out of him. Then an oath broke from his lips and in the revulsion of feeling that swept over him he wrenched his gaze away, cursing the day he had ever seen her.

A stifled whimper and a tiny hand slid tremblingly into his made him realize the passionate utterance that had been forced from him. He caught the boy in his arms and soothed him with remorseful tenderness. "Angry with thee—when am I ever angry with thee, thou little foolish one?" he murmured gently in response to the sobbing question that came muffled from the folds of his robes in which Saba's head was buried. Content with his answer, the child lay still. The clinging touch of his fingers, the soft warm weight of his slim little body brought a measure of consolation to the lonely man who held him.

Carew had been up since before daybreak, and lulled by the intense quiet and the heaviness of the night he began to be aware that drowsiness was stealing over him. He was almost asleep when the vague impression of a distant sound, a curious slithering sound that ended in a faint thud, penetrated to his only half conscious mind and roused him to sudden and complete wakefulness. The noise seemed to have come from the farther end of the garden. Who was abroad in the garden at this time of night?

As he stared keen-eyed into the darkness his brain was working rapidly. He had thought the child to be asleep but from a slight movement in his arms he knew that Saba too was awake and listening intently. To get the boy away before the happening he believed inevitable was his first care. Without altering his



The attack came with noiseless suddenness from a quarter Carew least expected.



own position he slid him silently behind the chair with a low injunction to go. But with a passionate gesture of refusal Saba clung to him and Carew was obliged to use unwilling force to unclasp the slender fingers twined desperately in his thick burnous.

"Gol!" he whispered again peremptorily. And as the boy crept slowly away he leaned forward in his chair once more, waiting with braced muscles and straining ears.

But the few moments' attention given to Saba had been moments used by another to advantage. The attack came with noiseless suddenness, from a quarter he least expected, and it was only his acute sense of smell that saved him. With the rank animal-like odor of the desert man reeking in his nostrils, he leaped to his feet, swerving as he turned. And his quick, instinctive movement saved his life, for the driving knife-thrust aimed at his heart failed in its objective and glanced off his arm, gashing it deeply. With a snarl of rage el Dhib thrust again. His right hand temporarily numbed and unable to draw the revolver at which his blood-drenched fingers fumbled nervously, Carew caught the swinging arm with his left hand and flung his whole weight forward against his opponent. They fell with a crash, the Arab undermost, and grappled in the darkness.

Crippled, Carew at first could do little more than retain his hold, but as the numbness passed from his wounded arm he managed with a desperate effort to jerk himself upward until his knees were pressing with crushing force on Abdul's chest and rigid forearm. Rolling sideways, he tore the knife from the fingers that clung to it tenaciously. But the maneuver cost him the advantage he had gained. With a lithe panther-like movement of his sinewy body, the Arab slipped uppermost, his hands at the other's throat.

Conscious that he was fighting for his life, Carew put forward his utmost power to meet the strength he knew to be equal to his own. Locked in a mortal embrace that seemed to admit of only one ending, they struggled with deadly purpose, writhing to and fro on the floor of the veranda until a sidelong jerk from one of them sent them over the edge and they rolled, still gripping fiercely, into the garden beneath.

The drop was a short one, but in falling Carew's head struck against the abutment of the marble stairway and for a moment he lay stunned. And Abdul, who had fallen on top of him, was not able to complete the work he had begun. Warned by the lights that flashed up in the villa, unable to recover the knife he had lost, with a parting curse he turned and ran for the shelter of the shadowy trees. Still dazed from the blow on his head, Carew staggered to his feet and stood staring stupidly after him. But as the flying figure almost reached the friendly darkness that would cover his flight the momentary cloud lifted from Carew's brain and he wrenched the revolver from his waistband. Yet with his finger pressing on the trigger he paused irresolute. Not at an unarmed man—not in the back! But the screaming whine of a bullet tearing past his head and a sharp crack behind him told him that Hosein was troubled by no such scruples. And with mingled feelings he watched Abdul el Dhib, caught at the moment he thought himself safe, plunge forward on his face and lie twisting in the agony of death.

When Carew reached him and, lifting him with practiced hands, supported him against his knee, the dying man's eyes rolled upward to the grave face bending over him and his con-

Hosein hadn't the scruples of Carew and a bullet tore past the latter's head with a screaming whine.

torted features relaxed in a grin of ghastly amusement.

"This was ordained, lord," he gasped painfully, a-pinkish foam gathering on his lips. "Thou or I—and Allah has chosen. To Him the praise," he added mockingly, and choked his life away on the crimson tide that poured from his mouth.

CHAPTER VII

SILENCE had settled again over the little oasis which an hour before had been the scene of noisiest activity.

Scattered amongst the palms and thorn trees the débris of a camp evidenced the passing of a caravan, and three or four miles away the train of lurching camels with its escort of mounted Arabs was still visible moving steadily over the rolling waste, heading for the south. Seated cross-legged on the warm ground, idly dribbling sand through his long brown fingers, Carew watched it with a feeling of envy, longing for the time when he could once more lead his own caravan towards the heart of the great desert.

But for the promise made to General Sanois he would already have left Algiers. The small attraction the town had once had for him had vanished completely in the mental disturbance that had dominated him during the last few weeks. And Sanois's preparations dragged interminably. Daily Carew was tempted to put his half laughing threat into execution and abandon the whole enterprise. But he had given his word. There was nothing for it but to wait with what patience he could muster.

Out of tune with himself and his surroundings, he had gone for distraction to Biskra to attend the annual race meeting and for three crowded days he had been able partially to forget the strange unrest that beset him. But only partially. The little desert town, filled to overflowing for the great event of the year, was too small for chance meetings to be avoided and several times he had glimpsed Geradine, blustering and insufferable there as in Algiers. By keeping closely to his own circle of acquaintances Carew had escaped coming into contact with the man for whom he had conceived a hatred that was inexplicable. And in Biskra he had other interests besides the racing to engage his attention. Amongst the Arab chiefs who poured into the town from far and wide he had encountered many old friends.

The Desert Healer

It was in response to the earnest request of one of them that Carew had left Biskra early the previous day to ride with him the first couple of stages of a journey that would take the sheik weeks to accomplish.

Wrapped in his burnous, his face hidden in his arms, the sheik had slept throughout the hour of the siesta and not even the clamor and bustle of the departing caravan had roused him.

Now it was time, and past the time, that the chief should start to overtake the caravan that was no longer distinguishable, and time that Carew himself set out on the fifty mile ride back to Biskra. Traveling with no camping impedimenta to hinder him, he had reckoned on spending the night at a tiny village that was known to him and which made a convenient halting place. He would have to ride hard if the squalid little collection of mud huts was to be reached before the light gave out. There was, too, an odd feeling in the air that he had only just realized. Instinctively his eyes swept the horizon. Far off to the south-east, where sky and sand met, a faint dark line like an inky smudge caught his attention and sent him to his feet with a sharp exclamation.

"You were better with your people, Sheik."

At the sound of his voice the chief looked up with a start and sudden anxiety flashed into his eyes as they followed the direction of the other's pointing finger. Without moving he shouted to his men and almost before the words died on his lips his horse was beside him and he had swung into the saddle.

Bending down, he caught Carew's outstretched hand and was gone in a swirl of dust and sand.

For a minute or two Carew lingered looking after him, then turned to Hosein, who was bringing up the horses. The man jerked his head towards the east.

"My lord has seen?" he murmured.

Carew nodded. "It may pass," he said, running his fingers caressingly over Suliman's neck before gathering up the reins.

But Hosein shook his head. "It will come," he asserted positively. "They know," he added, pointing to the horses, whose nervous fidgeting and sweat-drenched coats evidenced uneasiness.

"Then let it come!" replied Carew with a short laugh. "Are we children to fear a sandstorm?" And Hosein's grim features relaxed in an answering grin as he held his master's stirrup for him to mount.

Riding, the air seemed less stagnant but the heat increased momentarily and the deep silence of the desert was more strangely silent than usual.

The horses were racing, urged by instinct, and splashes of white foam thrown back from Suliman's champing jaws powdered Carew's dark burnous like flakes of snow.

As he turned in the saddle a sudden gust of wind, scorching as the heat from an oven door, struck against his face and a heavy peal of thunder crashed through the intense stillness, reverberating sharply like the prolonged rattling of artillery. For an instant the horses faltered, quivering and snorting, then leaped forward, racing neck and neck, and together the two men looked behind them. The inky smudge on the skyline was blacker and more apparent than it had been, rolling swiftly up like a dense, impenetrable wall, and for the first time Carew realized the gloom that, preoccupied, he had not noticed before. There seemed no possibility now of escap'g the storm that earlier he had thought would pass too far to the south to touch them, and the prospects for the night should they override the tiny village in the darkness were not cheering. But it was all in the day's work and he was accustomed to the vagaries of the desert. There was something in the thought of the approaching struggle with the elements that stirred his blood and made him almost welcome the physical discomfort that would inevitably ensue.

A vivid flash of lightning followed by another deafening roar of thunder concentrated all his attention on his nervous mount. Tightening his grip, Carew leaned forward, soothing the terrified animal with voice and hand. The gloom was increasing, the gusts of hot wind more frequent and of longer duration, bringing with them now the stinging whip of driving sand. There was a distant muttering like the far-off surge of waves beating against a rocky coast; suddenly the sun went out, hidden by the racing clouds that swept across the heavens; and with a tearing, whining scream the storm broke.

Reeling under the terrific impact of the wind that staggered even the galloping horses, blinded with the swirling sand, the two men crouched low in their saddles, wrestling with the flapping cloaks they strove to draw closer about them, struggling to keep near to each other, their voices lost in the roar of the tempest. The surrounding country was obliterated and a thick darkness enveloped them. Between his knees Carew could feel

the great bay trembling and starting. It was pure chance now where they would find themselves when the storm abated, for the darkness and the whirling clouds of sand obscured every landmark.

The flying particles stung like showers of spraying glass and the reins were rough and gritty between his wet fingers. But he was happier than he had been for weeks. The fighting instinct in him leaped to meet the fury of the storm. There was no time to think. He lived for the moment, every nerve strained to the utmost, his somber eyes glowing with a curious look of pleasure, his knees thrust tight against his horse's ribs, his powerful limbs braced to resist the violent gusts that threatened to tear him from the saddle.

The storm had been raging for some time before the rain came, a heavy tropical downpour that, unexpected as it was short-lived, drenched the men's thick cloaks and caked the sand on the horses' bodies. It passed quickly and with its going the gloom lessened slightly and the wind abated somewhat in its violence. But Carew placed no faith in the temporary lull. It would blow again later, or he was very much mistaken, and probably harder than before. Meanwhile it was an opportunity to push on, to increase the pace of the horses, whose mad gallop had gradually slackened while the storm was at its height.

The village they were making for could be easily passed within a stone's throw and yet missed. And night was falling rapidly. There was nothing for it but to carry on and trust to luck.

Carew was succumbing to an intense and growing feeling of drowsiness. He had not slept during the hour of the siesta at the oasis and he had been up the greater part of the previous night. More than once he found his sand-rimmed eyes closing. It was Hosein who noticed the first indication that luck had favored them and that they were on the right track for the village they had scarcely thought to find—a clump of withered palms clustered beside a broken well that had been dry for years. And it was again Hosein who made the further discovery that drew from him an exclamation that effectually banished his master's drowsiness.

Almost hidden by the palm trees and the crumbling masonry of the well, two riderless horses stood with drooping heads, ridden to a standstill apparently, for even Suliman's angry squeal failed to attract their attention.

At sight of them Carew scowled in momentary indecision. He had no wish to be hampered with the care of two spent horses, but it was not a night to pass even an animal in distress. With a word to Hosein he swung Suliman towards the little dead oasis.

The weary beasts took no notice of their approach and did not move as Carew drew rein beside them. A quick glance about him and he slid suddenly out of the saddle. Near by lay an Arab face downwards on the ground, and a few steps away a powerfully built European sat with his back propped against the broken wall of the well nursing a heavy riding whip across his knees. His head was sunk between his shoulders, his face hidden by the wide brim of the helmet pulled low on his forehead. Rain-drenched and spattered with mud and sand that caked his once immaculate boots and clung closely to the rough surface of his tweed coat, he presented a sorry spectacle; but his plight had evidently not impaired his power of speech, for there came from his lips a steady flow of uninterrupted blasphemy that sounded oddly in such a place and at such a time.

Carew was no purist himself, but the unnecessary foulness of the words that assailed his ears roused in him a feeling of disgust, and he turned abruptly to the prostrate Arab who seemed in more immediate need of attention. But as he touched him the man rolled from under his hands and stumbling to his feet shrank away with upraised arm as though to ward off a blow. His eyes were dazed but mingling with the pain in them there was a look of deep hatred, and his bruised and bleeding mouth told their own tale. The individual by the well was evidently a hard hitter as well as a hard swearer. To Carew, the sullen, twitching features were vaguely familiar and it was obvious, when after a few moments the Arab collected himself sufficiently to speak, that he himself was recognized. But he could not place the man and the name that was reluctantly vouchsafed conveyed nothing—he knew dozens of Arabs with the same designation. More he could not ask. Whatever were his feelings on the subject, he could not interfere between master and servant. But his expression was not pleasant and he was conscious of a rising anger as he swung on his heel to go back to the well.

He did not reach it. With slowly clenching hands he stood where he had turned, staring at the man who was leisurely coming towards him—the man he had been trying to avoid since the night, weeks ago, of the opera. The sodden helmet



Looking down at her, Carew saw that Marny's face was convulsed with a sudden spasm of pain.

was pushed back revealing clearly, even in the dim light, the blotched, dissipated looking face that had stirred him to so strange and deadly a hatred. And now, in their close proximity that strange hatred seemed to increase a thousandfold and it was all Carew could do to preserve an outward semblance of passivity and conceal the boiling rage that filled him. It was like nothing

he had ever experienced in his life before. He could not explain it. He could not conquer it. He could only hope to retain the self-command that seemed perilously near the breaking point, for again the same appalling desire to kill was pouring over him.

Aghast at the horrible impulse, he thrust his hands behind him to keep them from the weapon that lay hidden in the folds

The Desert Healer

of his waist cloth. And completely oblivious of the storm of passion his presence had evoked, Geradine strode up to him with the swaggering gait and overbearing demeanor that characterized him always but which was especially noticeable in his dealings with any native, irrespective of rank. A native to him was a native, an inferior creature little better than the beasts of the field, to be dominated by fear and kept in his place. He stood now, his legs planted widely apart, slapping his boot with his riding whip, surveying Carew through insolent half closed eyes.

"Look here," he began, his tone a mixture of truculence and arrogant condescension. "I'm in the devil of a mess. Came out from Biskra for a day or two's camping—missed my people in this infernal sandstorm—all the fault of that fool there. What'll you take to get me out of this bally graveyard? My beasts are knocked up—yours look pretty fresh. Name your price, and for heaven's sake get a move on. I—oh, damn!" he broke off with a petulant shrug of annoyance as Carew continued to stare at him with a purposely blank face that was neither helpful nor encouraging.

For a few moments, imagining himself not to be understood, he glared wrathfully at the supposed Arab, favoring him with a string of personal epithets that were neither complimentary nor parliamentary. And with contemptuous indifference Carew let him curse. If Geradine had accepted him as an Arab, an Arab he would remain—but not an Arab to be either browbeaten or bribed. He was not in a mood to make things easier for the blustering bully who was working himself up into a state of childish rage. He could alter his tone if he wanted assistance. Nor at the moment was Carew very certain that his assistance would be forthcoming. Why should he go out of his way to help a man he hated? To be left in the predicament in which he was would be a salutary experience that might have a chastening effect. And if he died in the desert, which was not in the least likely, his death would probably be a source of relief rather than grief to his friends and relations.

Quite suddenly Carew thought of the wife of the man who was facing him. She certainly, if all reports were true, would have no cause to lament a husband she evidently went in dread of. But what was that to him. A surge of anger went through him as his lowered eyes swept upward to meet the insolent stare fixed on him. The foul-mouthed brute! Almost unconsciously he moved a step forward, and there was something menacing in his expression that checked Geradine's flow of language. With a shade more civility in his tone he began to repeat his demands in halting French that was scarcely comprehensible. And with typical Arab aloofness Carew waited for him to come to the end of his stumbling explanations. But it was not on Geradine's account that he listened. It was the need of the wretched servant and the two exhausted horses that swayed him and moved him finally to a reluctant decision.

With a cold word of assent and a curt gesture that sent the quick blood rushing to the other's face, he turned haughtily as though from an inferior and walked back to the horses, leaving Geradine to stare after him sputtering with rage, twisting and bending the pliable whip between his coarse hands, in two minds whether to follow him or not. He was hanged if he would stick impudence from any Arab. The blighter could go to blazes, and his horses too for that matter. But a freshening gust of wind that, sand-laden, whipped against his cheek with unpleasant suggestiveness cut short his muttered imprecations, and quashed his half formed intention of revoking his demand for assistance and relying on himself to get out of an uncomfortable situation he was convinced was due entirely to the muddle-headedness of his servant.

With a snarl that boded little good for the unfortunate valet, Geradine went with no show of haste to join the group of men and horses by the well head. Carew was already mounted, wrestling with Suliman, who was backing and rearing impatiently. He swung the horse round as the viscount approached.

"You can ride my servant's horse," he said in French. "Yours can hardly carry themselves. The men will have to walk."

With a grunt which was certainly not an expression of courtesy, Geradine took the bridle Hosein offered him and climbed stiffly into the saddle. His drenched condition and his resentment at the authoritative tone addressed to him did not tend to improve either his manners or his temper, and with characteristic pettiness he vented his ill humor on the object nearest at hand. The horse that had been lent to him was plunging in furious protest at the raking spurs that were being used with unnecessary violence and, losing command of himself, he slashed savagely at the little shapely head with his whip. Twice the heavy thong rose and fell; then a hand like steel closed on his wrist and it was wrenched from him.

Turning with an oath, he found himself confronted by a pair of blazing eyes in which he read not only rage but a totally unexpected hatred that sent an odd sensation of cold rippling down his spine. He flinched involuntarily, dragging his horse aside, conscious for the first time in his life of a feeling of fear. But the strange look that had startled him was gone in a flash and Carew's face was impassive as he reined his own horse back.

"Your pardon, monsieur, he is unused to a whip," he said icily, and sent the offending weapon spinning into the mouth of the empty well, where it fell beyond recovery.

Speechless with fury Geradine glared at him and then, his French too limited adequately to express his feelings, let out a string of curses in his own language which would have given him more pleasure had he known them to be understood. But his hands were fully occupied with his enraged mount and Carew had already ridden on. It was blowing again steadily. Carew, sure now of his bearings, was heading more to the east and the swirling sand was driving straight at them. Muffled in his burnous, his face shielded somewhat by the close drawn haick, he felt it less than Geradine did. But he had no sympathy to waste on the huddled figure beside him. He reserved that for the two men plodding behind them with the exhausted horses. For them he was glad that the village lay only a bare three miles away. Progress was necessarily slow and more than once Geradine, impatient of the snail's pace at which they were proceeding, let out his fretting horse and dashed on ahead. But ignorant of the way and not relishing the prospect of losing sight of his companions in the growing darkness, he was forced each time to curb his impetuosity and wait for the others to come up with him.

For a time Geradine kept silence, but at last his annoyance found utterance.

"See here," he exploded angrily, as Carew for the fifth time ranged alongside without seeming to notice the temporary separation, "this isn't a bally funeral! For heaven's sake push on a bit." And as Carew turned to him with an indifferent "*Platt-il?*" he lost his temper completely. "*Plus vite* you silly ass!" he bellowed. "*Pas un cortège, n'est-ce-pas*—confound you!"

For a moment Carew hesitated, his own temper rising dangerously. Then he shrugged and raising his hand pointed behind him. "The men are walking," he said shortly, and wondered how long it would be before he was goaded into retaliation. To profess ignorance of his mother tongue was easy; to sit quietly under a storm of abuse and personal epithets was rather more difficult. But he had voluntarily decided on a certain line of action and he would have to go on with it, if only for the sake of the wretched Arab. Left in the lurch, Geradine would undoubtedly wreak his wrath on the servant who had been already sufficiently manhandled.

Again Carew racked his brains to recollect where he had seen the man before. It flashed across him at length. De Granier's man—taken on with the villa probably, poor devil. A fairly recent addition to the Frenchman's household, Malec had made no very definite impression on the guest he had served but once. But having identified him, Carew, casting back in his mind, remembered that de Granier had spoken of him as a curious character, responding to kindness but sullen when corrected and quick to take offense.

The change from the easy going Frenchman to service with a brute like Geradine must have been great, and Carew wondered suddenly what induced him to remain with a master he obviously hated. High wages—or a more sinister purpose? He checked himself abruptly. He would be doing murder by proxy, and rather enjoying it, if he let his thoughts race in this fashion. His own incomprehensible hatred was deep enough without allowing himself to dwell on another's grievances. And for him there was not even the excuse of a grievance. For no reason or cause whatsoever he had hated Geradine at sight.

Complete darkness had fallen before they stumbled upon the squalid little collection of mud huts that formed the village. Tenantless it seemed at first, for no lights shone from the tiny barred windows that were blocked with rags to keep out the drifting sand. But Hosein, dispatched in quest of the headman, returned shortly with an elderly Arab who, shrouded in a multitude of filthy coverings, salaamed obsequiously in answer to Carew's shouted inquiry and led them to a hut a little distance away.

Only a hotel it was, but sheltering an amazingly large family—vague shadowy figures, sexless in their close drawn draperies, who slipped away as the headman rousted them out unceremoniously to give place to the unexpected visitors. One room, the farther portion screened for the use of the women of the family, and indescribably dirty and comfortless. (Continued on page 120)

By H. C. WITWER
Specialist in Laughter

The Barber of Seville, ILL.

Illustrations by
J. W. McGurk

SOMETIMES I would like to read a story where the hero ain't no up-to-date Greek God which acts like Mr. Gentleman himself, could lick Dempsey and Wills in the same ring, and can't stop babies and dogs and Ziegfeld's Follies from goin' wild over him. In this same imaginary volume where the above darin' departure greets the reader's dumbfounded eye, I'd call things perfect if this human bein' would stumble in love with a nice, good natured, healthy girl which is by no means a ringer for Helen of Troy and is a bum dancer to boot.

But from the average novel you get the idea that for a homely man and woman to stage a wildly romantic love affair is a impossible feat. This must be no little discouragin' to a great many boys which don't resemble a collar ad and a great many girls which will never be mistaken for Norma Talmadge. Well, they ain't a good reason in the world for a inhabitant with a pan which is no treat to the tired eye to take cyanide. Some of the tastiest *affairs de heart* which ever broke up a dull day has been between ladies and gents with features which panicked the neighbor's children. As far as that goes, I bet lobsters, jellyfish, hop toads, porcupines, chimpanzees and the etc. has tender romances, and a guy named Sheridan which composed a wicked play a couple of hundred years ago says, "An *oyster* may be crossed in love!"

Why shouldn't love mean as much to the homely as it does to the handsome? History shows that most of the men and women which smacked the world for a mock turtle while they was in it was terrible lookers, but if you think that stopped 'em from learnin' the mysteries of a kiss, why, read their lives and get a real thrill! So if you ain't exactly a eye tonic of either sex, cheer up and remember, "Be it ever so homely, there's no face like your own!" as Shakespeare said, or else he didn't. And if you still got the idea that only the beautiful is addicted to love, let me give you the case of Nero Whiffletree, the Barber of Seville, Illinois, and learn about romance from him.

About a year ago I get wind of a jazzbo out in this slab which accordin' to the Chicago papers will be unable to stop himself from becomin' champion middleweight of at least the world. He bounds around rejoicin' in the name of Nitroglycerin Pico and the list of the boys he's knocked for a triple looks like a page from the city directory. In fact I understand that he's got



"My dawnee, I believe?" says some big clown to the boss, and the next time I see her it's past midnight.

documentary proof that he's the original cat's meow and all others is rank imitations. Well, as pilot of the current middle-weight champ I am no little interested in these bananas which crops up from time to time with designs on our title, so I decide to take a voyage to Seville, Ill., and see for myself is Nitroglycerin Pico somethin' to think about or just one more preliminary bout chump. I took a tough boy along with me to give this Pico a private workout. The name of the kid I carried with me was Rough House Riley and he was as good as any boy in his division. He was champion middleweight of the world.

When we get to Seville I park Riley at the hotel after findin' out that Monsieur Nitroglycerin Pico is a gendarme when not engaged in fisticuffs and will most doubtless be found in court. It seems only the day before he had raided the combination barber shop, pool room and near-beer saloon operated by this Nero Whiffletree, which was afterwards to be the life of our



"Colleen is afraid I'll get my face all cut up," says Nero. "and she don't want my looks spoiled."

party. I get into the court room just as Nitroglycerin Pico is tellin' the judge what it's all about. Nitro is one vicious lookin' baby if they ever was one! He's got a pair of shoulders on him like a gorilla, a battle scarred pan and hands like a couple of hams. In fact, he's a little *too* burly to rush my gently reared champion up against without plenty of due consideration. You can see by the way the natives present regard him and whisper amongst themselves that Nitro's got quite a followin' in dear old Seville. No matter what the world may say, they think he's *good!*

Nitro gets through doin' his stuff and the judge calls on Nero Whiffletree, the captive. Nero is no invalid himself when it comes to build, but his *face* is his principal point of interest. I have saw some homely males in my time, but this tomato packs a set of features which belonged in the comic section of the Sunday papers and nowhere else.

"You are charged with sellin' bootleg," growls the judge, squintin' at Nero over his cheaters. "How d'ye plead?"

"Judge," says Nero, wettin' his lips with his tongue, "they ain't been a drop of hooch in my place since Prohibition. This here's nothin' but a put up job!"

"Guilty, eh?" barks the judge, payin' no attention to Nero's indignant stare. "Where's the evidence?"

Nitroglycerin Pico puts a interestin' bottle on the judge's desk and his worship takes a good long drink.

"Whoosh!" he chokes, makin' a terrible face and gulpin' down about half the water in a pitcher in front of him. Then he bangs on the desk with his gavel and Nero trembles. "You infernal scoundrel!" bawls his honor, red in the face and makin' a game battle for his breath. "What d'ye mean by sellin' sich stuff as this—d'ye want to poison me? I fine ye——"

Nero's so scared at the way the judge is gulpin' and gaspin' that he must of forgot where he's at. He reaches in his rear pocket and pulls out a flask.

"This here's the real McCoy, judge!" he says eagerly. "I——"

"Ha!" snorts the judge, grabbin' the flask. "More evidence, hey?" He sniffs the bottle, grins, takes a long swallow and smacks his lips. "Aaah!" he says, clearin' his throat and lookin' around the court room. His wanderin' eye falls on the anxious Nero and he shoves one hand in his pants pocket. "Eh—what do I owe you?" he says, kind of dreamy.

Nero gives a start and the entire attendance falls a victim to the hystericals, which brings the judge back to himself. If his face was red before, you should of saw it now!

"Order in the court!" bawls this master mind, bangin' with his gavel. "What d'ye think this is—a theayter? One more cackle out of you idjuits and I'll jail the lot of ye for contempt! Nero

Whiffletree, I fine ye fifty dollars and don't tell this court ye ain't got the money, because that's dern good likker and ye must be gettin' fancy prices for it—if ye ain't, yer a darn fule!"

Nero pays up.

I got half a mind to make the judge a proposition to take his act into New York where he's a cinch for at least thirty weeks on the Big Time, but first I want to interview Nitroglycerin Pico, the fightin' constabule, which is the baby I come out to this trap to see. However, a little coincident which immediately comes to pass right outside this temple of justice drives both Nitro and the judge out of my mind.

Nero Whiffletree comes out of court mutterin' and mumblin' to himself with a four alarm fire in each eye. He's so steamed up over that fifty-buck fine he's fit to be tied. Nitroglycerin Pico, the pride of Seville and heir apparent to the middleweight throne, follows him, strollin' along at a easy gait while the admirin' populace makes way for him.

"Here comes the greatest fighter the world has ever saw!" says a awe-stricken native admirin'ly. "He'll be the next champion as sure as the Lord made little apples!"

"Don't make me laugh!" snarls Nero Whiffletree, elbowin' his way through the crowd. "I only wisht that dizzy clown was champen *now*, because I'm goin' to knock him dead!"

Before anybody can stop this daredevil he has turned back and stepped in front of Nitro, which looks down on him with a sneer.

"You big sapolio!" howls Nero with a whinney of rage. "Since you turned prizefighter and pushed over a couple of cripples you're all swelled up like a human yeast cake, ain't you? Think you're the duck's quack, hey? Well, no dumbbell like you is goin' to give me a pushin' around and get away with it!"

Sock!

With great presence of mind, Nero Whiffletree leaps off mother earth a baker's dozen inches and plants a murderous right swing on the invitin' jaw of his charmin' tête-à-tête, changin' him like magic from Nitroglycerin Pico to a dull, sickenin' thud. This Pico hit the wooden plankin' outside the court so hard he must of been pickin' splinters out of his pan for weeks afterwards and if they hadn't of swept him up he'd of been layin' there yet.

While the dumbfounded yokels is standin' around thunderstruck gazin' at their exceedin'ly fallen idol, I grabbed Nero by the arm and hustled him through the mob to cover. Seemin'ly in a trance as the result of his sensational bid for fame, Nero acts like a man which has sneezed in the Grand Canyon and immediately saw a landslide fill it up with dirt. He's miles beyond speech and that's all they is to it.

"Well, Nero," I says, slappin' him on the back, "you certainly

ruined this Nitroglycerin Pico with that sock on the button, you did for a fact! He'll prob'ly have to leave town now, hey?" Nero Whiffletree shudders.

"You mean I'll prob'ly have to leave town!" he says. "When that bozo comes back to life he'll give me a smackin' I'll remember to my dyin' day and then he'll drag me to the hoosegow again for assaultin' and batteryin' a officer of the law. I must of been crazy to of cuffed him!"

"Apple sauce!" I snorts. "That punch will make your name known from here to sunny Italy before I get through with you. Have you ever did any scrappin'?"

"Well, I didn't put Pico on the floor with a nasty look, did I?" says this egg.

"A bright answer," I says. "D'ye know who I am?"

"Sure!" says Nero, with a sarcastical grin on his homely pan. "You're Hawkshaw, the detective!" And he starts to move on.

"Listen!" I says, blockin' his way, "don't get *too* bright. When it comes to usin' my hands I'm nobody's fool either. You're in a jam, my good man, and I'm here to show you a perfect out and a chance to make your fortune to boot!"

Nero looks me over.

"Do your stuff!" he says.

"Well, to begin with," I tell him, "I'm manager of Rough House Riley, middleweight champion of the civilized world!"

"That ain't *my* fault," says Nero. "What d'ye expect me to do—fall down here in a fit?"

This burns me up and I'm about to walk off and leave this small town comic to his fate, when I thought of that sock which knocked Nitroglycerin Pico for a trip.

"Look here," I says, "how would you like to join my stable, come East with me and fight for important money around New York? I'll give you forty percent of most of your purses, rate you along, and if you can slap a few other parsnips like you slapped Mr. Pico you'll soon have Rockefeller gnashin' his teeth. That's a offer which gets you out of here before this Pico wakes up and pinches you and it also gives you a chance to see the sights of New York—a thrill a hick like you will never forget!"

"Be yourself!" sneers Nero. "I know more about New York than *you* do—I used to be a guide on a rubberneck wagon there and that burg thrills me about the same way a short skirt would thrill Adam! Your proposition is the bunk. I ain't no fighter, I'm a barber, and I'd rather work on their chins with a razor than I would with a boxin' glove. Knockin' Pico dead was dumb luck on my part. He didn't think I'd hit him no more than he thought I was Mary Pickford. On your way, you're holdin' up traffic!"

With that he blows. A sap for the ages, what?

Well, this mug's one punch kayo of Mr. Nitroglycerin Pico murders my interest in Nitro, so me and Rough House Riley checks out of Seville, Ill. What I did loathe to leave behind, though, was Nero Whiffle-tree. I simply couldn't get out of my mind that clout he hit the fightin' cop and that's all they was to it. A baby which could hit like that had a perfect right to be part of my income. He don't have to be no boxer. Dynamite can't box either!

Upon returnin' to the noted seaport and rapidly growin' hamlet of New York, I turned Rough House Riley out to pasture while I scurry up to a relative of mine by marriage, to wit, my wife. Although we been wed ten years we're still good friends. But our secrets of how to be happy though married will never reach the world, because we once started to write a book on it and we had such a fearful battle over what should go in this volume that the great American novel went by the board. However, my helpmeet is a breath-taker which would distract attention from Niagara Falls and I would dive into said falls with an anvil in each hand should she ever cancel me. Her trick is bein' beautiful and mine is makin' jack. We're both experts at our respective callin's and maybe that's the reason we seldom punish the neighbors with heated dialogue.

Anyways, when I reach Mortgage Gardens-on-the-Hudson,

where we have just bought a new bower, this second Cleopatra greets me in a gown which would of made the first Cleopatra goal a dozen Mark Antonys. We exchange kisses till you couldn't make nobody believe we was married at all, while from below decks comes sounds of revelry by night. I peep over the stairway and downstairs it looks like New Year's Eve durin' the times when we were all sayin' "They *can't* put prohibition over in New York!" The boys and girls is struttin' their stuff to the tune of a record made by Mr. Jazz himself and fun is conspicuous

by its presence. I am about to inquire what it's all about when my bride remarks that by a odd coincidence we have got to spend the night at a hotel.

"How come?" I says, with great surprise and no little astonishment.

"Well," says my spouse, "you know how we've been inviting different friends of ours from time to time to spend a week-end in our new home. It seems they can't take a joke and tonight they've all come up together. When I get through parking our guests here for the night there will be no room for us."

"Can't I double up with the boys and you double up with the girls?" I says.

"We don't know them well enough for that," says the wife. "Did you bring me anything from Madrid?"

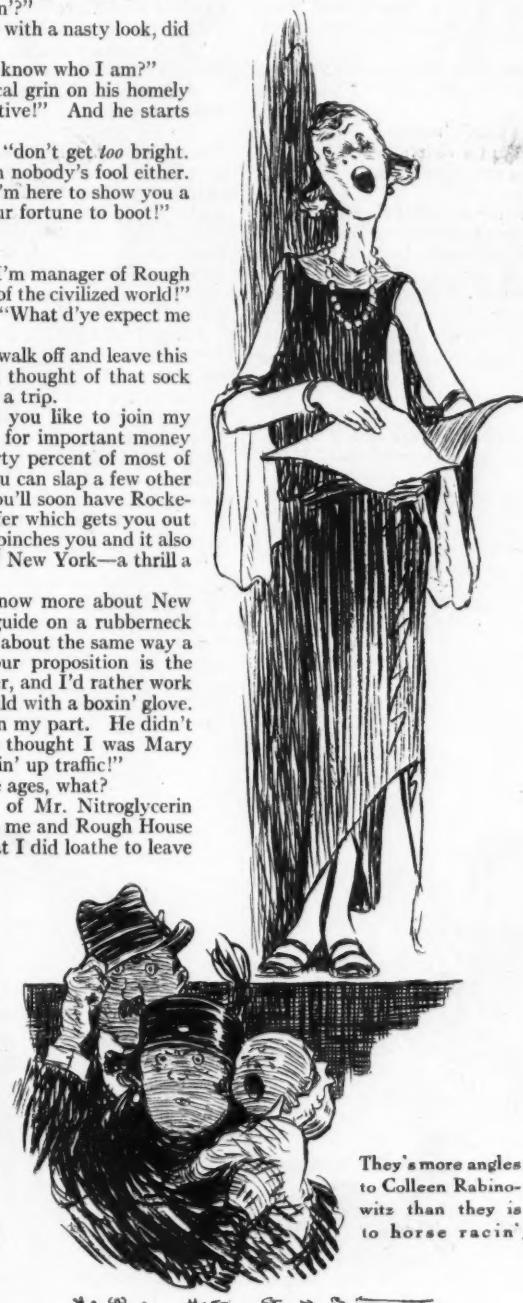
"Seville, not Madrid," I says. "I was in Illinois, not Russia." I reach in my inside pocket and pull out a wrist watch which I bought in Chicago for her with great presence of mind and a hundred and sixty-eight bucks. It was the duke's cuticle, no foolin', and it went for a four bagger.

"What have you got for your great big handsome husband?" I says, when the applause for the arm clock has died down.

"This—sweetie!" she says and hands me a bill for a Simple Six sedan, \$7,500, not countin' the horn. "Now that we're living out here in exclusive Mortgage Gardens with all the millionaire Wall Street bond messengers," she goes on, "we simply have to have a big car. Come out in the garage and I'll show you my—our—beautiful Simple Six. I turned in our Rolls-Rough to the company and they allowed me almost twenty-five dollars on it. Wasn't that wonderful of them?"

"It sure was noble!" I says. "Tomorrow I'll take the house over and maybe they'll allow me a runnin' start or somethin' on it. We need a seventy-five hundred buck car the same way we each need another neck! Where in the name of Detroit am I goin' to snare any seventy-five hundred smackers?"

"That, sweetheart, is something for *you* to think about," she smiles sweetly, throwin' open the door of a garage I would of once been glad to call my residence. "There's everything on it from motorcycle cop bafflers to nonskid time payments. We don't have to pay the whole seventy-five hundred down, you know."



They's more angles to Colleen Rabino-witz than they is to horse racin'.

The Barber of Seville, Ill.

"You have just mentioned the best thing about the car," I says. "What do we have to pay down?"

"Only seventy-four hundred and fifty dollars!" she tells me. On the ways back to the house my wife says she forgot to tell me they was a special delivery letter just came for me. I reared on my hind legs and moaned because she didn't give me the letter the minute I stuck my comely nose in the door and she merely says if I get that excited over a letter she'd hate to be around when I got a telegram. Anyways, she adds, the missive is prob'ly only from one of my nasty old prizefighters.

"My prizefighters may be nasty," I says, "but I won't stand for them bein' called old. Besides, old or nasty, they're keepin' us alive—laugh that off!"

"Well, don't let any of our guests know that you're a manager of prizefighters, or I'll die of shame!" she says. "I told them you were a business man."

"Aha!" I says. "I thought you didn't believe in lyin'!"

"I don't," she comes back. "And I didn't lie. I said you were in the *glove* business and you are, aren't you?"

Ain't she cute?

Well, when we get back to the house some big clown in a dress suit comes along and says, "My dawnce, I believe?" to the boss and the next time I see her it's past midnight, because I couldn't dance if they was a guy shootin' at my feet. However, I have sneaked upstairs and got pillows and trimmin's in season and fixed up a bed in the \$7,500 Simple Six sedan so's me and my wife don't have to go to no hotel while the guests makes merry in our home. Meanwhile I have read the special delivery letter and here it is:

Deer Ser,

When you was in Seville you made the crack that if ever I ever come to New Yawk to look you up. Remember me? I am the guy which made Sweet Spirits of Niter out of Nitroglycerin Pico, the big false alarm. Well, my brother is running my joint in Seville and I have got his old job in the Hotel Escape Barber Shop. The big stiffs don't allow no tips, but I am getting past O. K. Come in and see me and I'll give you a trimming (on your hair) ha, ha.

Yours truly,
Nero Whiffletree,
The Barber of Seville, Ill.

I decide to visit Nero the next mornin', as his charmin' letter has revived my hopes of addin' him to my stable of boss leather pushers. I have no trouble at all rememberin' that sock which flattened Nitroglycerin Pico, which, I notice by the papers, is



"I ain't good looking, hey?" growls Nero. "Well, people which lives in celluloid houses shouldn't throw matches!"

still knockin' 'em over around Chicago. In fact, accordin' to a paper I got in my hand, Nitro has stopped Avalanche Higgins in two rounds the night before. This Higgins is tougher than a life sentence and he has went ten boisterous rounds to a draw with Rough House Riley, my champ. On the ways up to the Hotel Escape, where Nero is now doin' his stuff, I pick up Rough House Riley and bring him along. Nero is standin' behind the last chair and he greets me like I'm his father and he was a fellow which is fond of his parents. I guess the poor dumbbell was so glad to see anybody he knew in the big city where he's all alone that he could of cried. A joyful smile fits across his homely pan as we shook hands.

"Your friend certainly ain't very good lookin', is he?" says Rough House, grinnin' openly at Nero's comic supplement profile.

"Maybe he ain't tryin'," I says, hopin' to avoid bloodshed and violence.

"I ain't good lookin', hey?" growls Nero, gazin' at Rough House Riley's battle-scared features. "Well, people which lives in celluloid houses shouldn't throw matches!"

"Shut up, clown!" grunts Riley, easin' into the chair. "Gimme a shave. I don't want nothin' else, see? I don't want no massage, hair cut, tonic, hot towels, manicure, shoe shine, singe, shampoo, olive oil rub or conversation! Just a shave, and no questions asked, get me?"

"Absolutely!" says Nero, tuckin' a towel under Riley's lantern chin. "Eh—would you like some lather?"

Rough House groans.

"Pick up the marbles, you win!" he says, and sinks back in the chair.

A few days later the thought strikes me that if I can sell Nero the idea of comin' up to Eddie McWagon's gym and seein' Rough House Riley and some other boys trainin', he may get hypnotized by the atmosphere and change his mind with the regards to a career in the ring. So I kept makin' a hangout of the Hotel Escape barber shop and finally one afternoon he happens to be off duty and he comes up to the gym with me. I led the open mouthed Nero across to where my five star special, Rough House Riley, is convincin' a sparrin' partner that the sparrin' partner should of took up steam fittin' and left boxin' for guys which bleeds less easy.

"There you see the world's middleweight champ in action, Nero," I says. "He clicks off from twenty to fifty thousand a fight. How d'ye like him?"

"Not so good!" says Nero scornfully. "He don't look to me like he could hit the ground with his hat. If he ever fights Nitroglycerin Pico they'll be a new champion, unless they let this jazzbo of yours go in with a hatchet in his glove."

Rough House Riley's face gets redder than the reddest thing you ever seen. He busts away from his grinnin' sparrin' partner and takes a punch at Nero, which, should it of landed, woudl of knocked the critical barber past the city line. Nero does a standin' broad jump backwards, hittin' a punchin' bag with his head. The bag returns the compliment and with a wild oath Nero takes a free swing at it. He misses from here to Peoria and wound up the number sittin' on the floor kind of dazed. The handlers crowds around and applauds, while the angry glare leaves Rough House Riley's face.

"It's bad luck to hit a cripple or a idiot," he grins at Nero. "So I'll leave you alone."

Nero scrambles to his feet and glares around in a rage.



Nero Whiffletree and Colleen Rabinowitz would of made Romeo and Juliet look like landlord and tenant!

"I didn't come here to be made a fool of!" he howls. "Why should you," says Riley, "when you already had that part of it done years ago?"

"Get gay with me," hollers Nero, "and I'll smack you down, champine or no champine!"

"I think I'll just break your nose for you!" coldly remarks Riley, steppin' closer and settin' for a straight left.

But then I stepped in between the gladiators. Fun's fun, but I don't want either of my merry men to get shopworn right then and there. So I manage to smooth matters over.

Then I get to work on Nero on the subject of boxin', makin' him a offer which none but a half-wit would turn down. But no can do! Boxin' don't disturb Nero and that's all they is to it.

Even a dumbbell can be a boxer, explains Nero, and cites the indignant Riley for a example, but bein' a barber is a art. Likewise, he says, he's no ordinary hair mower, but a big time boss tonsorial master which clamps down a mean hot towel and scrapes a nasty chin.

"It's no use," says Nero finally. "My girl would never stand for me bein' a pug."

"Why don't you stop clownin'?" sneers Riley. "Where would a guy with a face like yours get a girl?"

"Looks don't mean nothin' where women is concerned if a guy plays his cards right," says Nero. "Solomon was no Valentino, yet a thousand women thought he was the eagle's vest."

"Who's Solomon?" asks Riley. (Continued on page 102)



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CAMPBELL STUDIOS

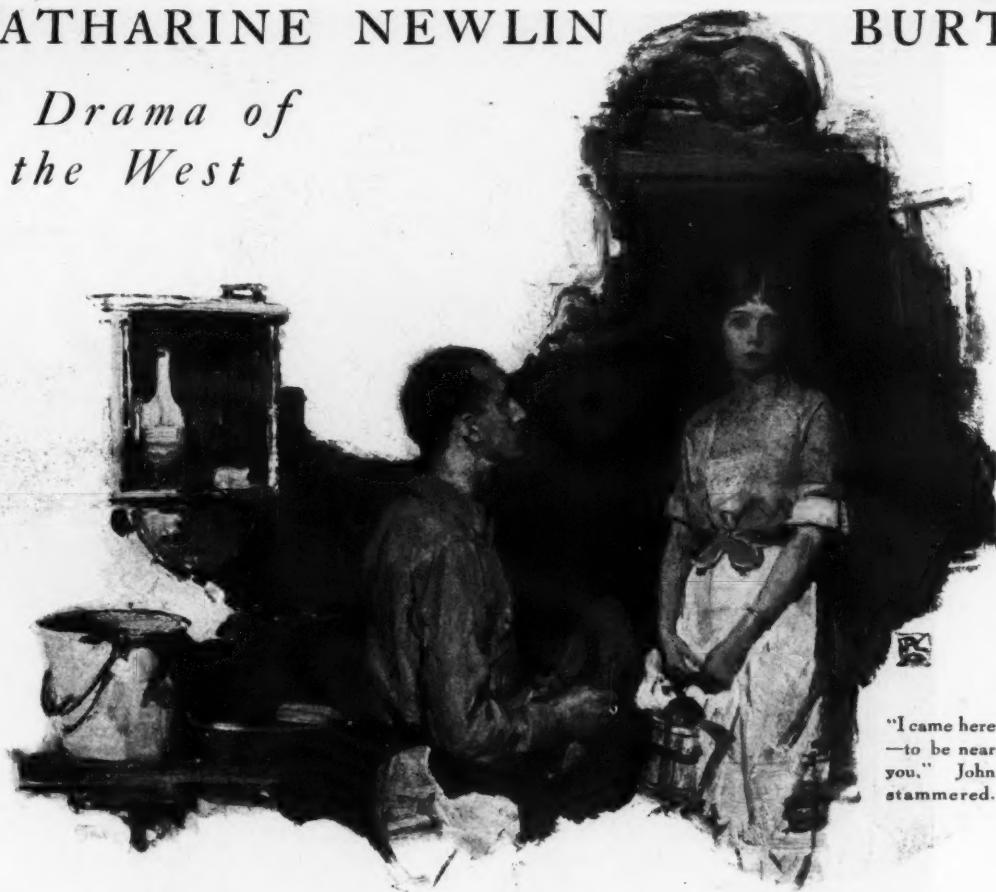
KATHARINE NEWLIN BURT

*who proves that the most powerful
stories are not necessarily
written by men*

By KATHARINE NEWLIN

BURT

*A Drama of
the West*



"I came here
—to be near
you," John
stammered.

The Eagle's Feather

Illustrations by Pruett Carter

JOHN TRENT came into the presence of Delila Jameison and, with a quiver of his nerves like the quiver of a horse's skin at the light touch of a spur, instantly abandoned his incredulity. It was not, he had told himself, smiling up his sleeve at the hushed voices of valley report, that she was a big frog in a little pool; it was that she would have been a big frog in any pool. She was, he admitted as her eyes flickered across him, one of those rare women who are the natural rulers and scorners of men.

She sat at one end of her long log-built bare living room, her back against the wall, one hand resting on the littered pine board table before her, and looked casually from his lanky escort to him. He had been introduced briefly by this escort as a "hobo just in from outside lookin' for a ranch job." Delila Jameison acknowledged this introduction by a nod. Her beaked brown face, pouncing eyes and long, ironical, unfeminine mouth betrayed a terrible accuracy in comment. John felt that she knew his type, discerned the fundamental purposelessness of his past existence, the gradual withdrawals of unused opportunities, the penalties of occasional recklessness. Whatever his guarded face could yield of information, whatever deductions could be drawn from his ragged and dusty leanness of person and his cleanliness of well shaven jaw, had been instantly yielded and deduced.

She pulled "the makings" from her shirt pocket—it was a man's blue chambray shirt open at the collar—rolled and lighted her cigarette with a merciless sort of leisureliness.

"You can't work at Circle R," said Delila eventually. "You're

too easy to look at. I don't employ your sort—makes my girls trashy and my men sore." Her voice was not unpleasantly like the sound of a saw singing through soft wood. It confirmed that little contracting comment of his nerves.

The smile with which, ages of experience ago, John Trent had disarmed the angers of his English nurse, crept now into his bland English eyes. He twinkled sweetly down upon the woman and said nothing. He was enormously afraid that he had failed, that he would really not be allowed to work for her, but this fear he managed to conceal behind his smile; even more carefully he hid a masculine resentment. So she expected to bully him, did she?—this leathery-faced woman, gray in her hair, wrinkles about her eyelids, with her cigarette stained fingers, her shoulders tilted against a log wall—an uncouth, rugged and unlovely tyrant who owned more than a woman's share of acreage and cattle.

"Anyone tell you I needed a man?" she asked after she had observed his unrevealing smile.

"No one. I wanted to work—for you." She lifted a pair of beautiful dark crescent eyebrows. "For the land's sake—why?"

"I like to work for the biggest man in any country I happen into and you're the biggest—man in Bear Valley. That's why."

He couldn't be sure that a faint stain painted her weather-beaten cheeks. Certainly her eyes betrayed no softness of flattered vanity. But he had a sensation of successful diplomacy. Just before the desperately calculated speech he had



"I vill teach you nod to say—no. You now goin' to learn how to say yes—to one big strong man," thundered

glanced at the big grizzled fellow who had led him up from the bunk house to the main cabin. From such men as these, quick deduction told him, she had not received any very deft sycophancy; homage at best had been expressed in action, in surly obedience or in slick subservience. There had been no man of them worthy of the superb quality which made her, shut in here by ignorance and mountains and narrow opportunity, a sister of Great Catherine and Great Elizabeth.

Half guessing the faint tingle his compliment had brought her, he felt a sudden warmth of sympathy, of understanding. As he stood there, his hand resting on her pine board council table, looking down at her from his slim height, he recognized that she was, for all the hawk glitter of her eyes and the grim sardonic twist of her lips, a caged creature. No, not hawk. Eagle! Those sun-gazing yellow eyes had their own haughty and mute wistfulness.

"What'll you do if I don't take you on?"

"Go on out of here."

"How about Van Breuwen? He'll give you a job, likely. It's branding time."

Trent's face forgot itself and set. "I won't work for that damned Dutchman."

42

Her brows lifted again. It was her one charming and feminine gesture.

Trent went on slowly. "I fell in—and out—with him on my way up the country. He's a mean man to work for and an ugly customer to work against. If I stop in Bear Valley, I'll work against him."

He got this out with sharpness and she seemed to bite at his words with a zest of attention. There went between them a current of electric comprehension, interrupted by the appearance of someone to speak to "the boss." She waved Trent to one side, where he stood against the uncurtained window and watched her at her dealings. His blood warmed to a vision of unique, exciting opportunity. Prime minister—well, foreman of Circle R . . .

To Delila, a fair, smooth, crafty looking fellow with ice-blue eyes was suggesting that she had made a blunder, which concerned "breeding through that stallion of Martin's." His suggestion was patiently listened to and demolished with a slow conclusive sarcasm. As the defeated critic turned to go, she drew her lash across his humiliation. "Carry it under your hat, Jeff Carey, that you're not my foreman—yet." His face above



Van Breuwen. *Martha was as fierce as a cornered wildcat but wasting not a breath in spoken defiance or outcry.*

his jaunty blue silk scarf flamed to the Indian paintbrush dark red. He just caught, out of the corner of one troubled eye, Trent's involuntary little grin. There was, it appeared, an immediate resolution taken by Jeff Carey to pass over humiliation to the smiler of such untimely smiles. As for Trent, he wanted to apologize and felt the depression of a newly acquired enmity. He had had so many enemies—curse that rash expressiveness of feature!

Delila beckoned to him and he moved forward rather hopelessly. She was already figuring and did not look up. She spoke with her cigarette in the corner of her lips.

"Lost my roustabout yesterday," she said. "Pigs haven't been fed today. Johnnie, take this young gentleman down and give him Piggy's overalls and show him the trail to the garbage. After that, the wood pile. Nights, young fellow, you can fetch hot water to the bunk house for Dandy's tub—that's Carey, the man who just went out—and mornings, at five o'clock, set a bucket at my door and give me a call. Pay you forty dollars a month."

Trent bowed, looked her in the eyes and walked off behind the grinning ranch hand, perfectly conscious that his flush matched

Jeff Carey's and that he would have liked to kick his escort to a pulp. But, below the little prickings of humiliation and resentment, he felt that he had made his goal and his heart sang. The girl—the girl—the girl . . .

Down in the bunk house he donned Piggy's overalls under the laughing comment of men whose day's work was over and who were not loath to torment a newcomer of crispish speech and pronounced physical good looks. Their eyes, appraising him, were vain, sensitive and clear, the eyes of individualistic frontiersmen, lonely, introspective, more like the eyes of women. They mocked as skilfully as girls. But Trent, with an English public school training in his past, with more than a dozen years of drifting hardship, soldiering and job hunting since, was ready enough with good-humored retort and hardy willingness to see the joke. He departed, grinning, with his wheelbarrow to the regions back of the ranch house where the neglected garbage awaited his attention. He found the big unsavory zinc can and, using the lean muscles of arm and back, he rolled it gingerly upon his tilted barrow. Then he straightened, turned, and in the open kitchen doorway saw the girl.

Instantly he was aware of the beauty of the hour. He saw



that dusk was blue, that above her there the mountains drifted up like dreams. He smelled the spice of sage, heard the voice of the river and a chord struck in the throat of a drowsy thrush. He knew that the lighted window square was a warm golden human light in contrast to the unearthly azures of the evening. She stood in her gingham dress and dried her hands on her skirt and smiled. Her face was rose all across its brow and widish cheek bones, down the clear chin and long brown throat.

"I didn't know you just at first. I was kind of—surprised," she said.

He came to the step below her door. He had been skeptical of such transfigurations as this one that had caught him up to a breathless sudden height. Now he was shy, speech left him, his tongue was heavy and his heart large. It seemed to be learning how to beat.

"What's your name?" he asked.

She laughed shyly. "Martha."

"I came here—to be near you."

Again she laughed, opening and closing her dark and rather timid eyes, and shaking her head vigorously. She was too shy to protest in speech. He watched the flush fade so that the little boyish freckles stood out again across her nose and cheeks. Her mouth was beauty, to be sculptured, painted, dreamed of, and, O Lord of Lovers!—to be kissed.

"You weren't angry with me, then—on the stage?" he stammered. "That big man, Van Breuwen, didn't make you think I was a boor, staring at you out of insolence? I begged your pardon—but I need not have done so—I ought to've thrashed the ugly brute." He sighed. "I'm too slow, sometimes, with my fists."

"I don't pay heed to Van Breuwen—anything he says." She began picking at the bark alongside the door, looking down, her eyelashes moving as though she were angry and embarrassed. "If I did I'd run as far from him as the hills would let me.

I've been scared of him ever since I came here. They say I'm foolish—that he'd be a great match for me. He would be wouldn't he?—with that big ranch and all his cattle."

"A match?" Trent repeated uncertainly, his heart shrinking. "He wants me—twice now he's asked. Let's not talk about him." She let him see then the troubled uncertainty of her eyes, which held something that cried for help. They laughed suddenly. "You may not be quick with your fists," she said, "but you can look fierce!"

"You were singing in the wagon," said John. "When Van Breuwen frightened you about my staring, you stopped. The tune's been bothering me ever since. Won't you finish the song for me now?" He whistled a few doubtful notes.

She looked at him with too ready an obedience—life had made her docile—and sang, her eyes filled with an anxious sort of pleasure, moving her head a little to mark the irregular rhythms.

Whippoorwill, I hear you calling me—

A voice inside the kitchen clamored like an iron bell. "O Martha! Say, Martha!"

She turned instantly; her eyes grew great with laughter. She went in tilting back her head, singing to show him the ludicrous appositeness of the summons—

I hear you calling me—Whippoorwill!

John walked six blind steps from the empty door and leaned against a fence which seemed to grow out of the ground to stop him. She was the very body of all the homeless longings of his brain. Why? Why? In God's name—why? After a world's experience, dingy and divine—this ranch child, sent down on the mail stage to town to do feminine errands for Circle R, perched like a gay little bird beside him all one day long, jolting across miles of sage, shy, never speaking, and singing under her breath until she became too self-conscious when Van Breuwen boarded the wagon, looked

Trent cut the truth out of Dandy with his own whip and made him eat his lies.

frightened at the sudden quarrel between him and Trent, and went dumb. Only one day, and that four days ago, but now she was his for always—she must be for always, his.

A faint stench of the pig sty drifted across the sage, and with it a realization, hideous and overwhelming, of his utter hungry poverty, his failures, his homelessness. John Trent, thirty years old, gentleman and vagrant, could not ask even this little ranch girl to be his wife.

He looked up at the groping mountains, dark to his vision, and he had a sense of confinement, at first alarming, then subtly reassuring. He had been set down at last in a narrow place. The ambition which had flashed up in him when he stood before Delila Jameison's council table revived. Here was a kingdom as large as one of those medieval states where soldiers of fortune had won power in the service of such women. If, adroit, intelligent, ruthless, he became her prime minister, her necessity—Queer how the mountains shut you in—and out—and wrote forgetfulness like a spell across the sky . . . He straightened

walked back to the barrow and, lifting its weight vigorously, moved with long steps across the rough ground in the direction of the sty. His eyes held the splendor of an evening star, suddenly discovered by that seeking mountain head.

The months that followed ran with all the energy of a driven machine. Love, hatred, ambition throbbed with concentrated force. Against his rival in diplomacy, Jeff Carey, and against his rival in love, Pier Van Breuwen, Trent delved, doubled, writhed and struck, wrestler and pugilist by turns. Closer and closer his determined loyalty drew him to the eagle woman.

In modern frontier states as in medieval principalities, opportunity for promotion, recognition of special gifts, comes swift and soon. Circle R was not slow to discover the quality of its new roustabout. Trent kept himself in his employer's eye by clever contrivances, by a bettering of the pigs' environment, by the invention of a tin-lined tank superimposed upon an iron stove which gave the ranch a perpetual supply of hot water. Shaving became the fashion and the dishwasher smiled. Presently came haying season and all hands were called out to service in the fields. More important even than stock in this mountain valley was the winter fodder. The prosperity of Circle R rested on the produce of Delila's broad bright acres of hay and grain. She was field marshal herself, now running a tractor, now driving a team, now stirring sluggards with a biting comment, now humorously sympathetic with the spitting ruminative prophecies of some old hand. She summoned Trent with an alarming bugle call of his first name, "You, John!" from his handling of a pitchfork and, while he awaited a summary dismissal or a sharp reprimand, she called another blue-clad figure down from the seat of a mowing machine.

"You climb up there, Trent, and let this boob mishandle your pitchfork. What he don't know about machinery would fill a mail order catalogue from cover to order blanks."

Trent, flushed, climbed up—and spurned the first step of his ambition's ladder. Dandy's observant sneers only sharpened his appreciation; and, servitor of love as the sunburnt soldierly vagabond had become, he had a vision of reward that stood up as beautiful in the golden harvest fields as Ruth.

It was curious how he and Martha guarded their secret. She was a silent, supple-minded girl, soul and body made on the same pattern. Her intelligence, lambent beneath the shyness of her eyes and speech, seemed to follow the turnings of his unspoken thoughts and glow upon them. He had learned in queer, breathless, half secret interviews, her history. She had been left a little penniless seven year old outcast in Chicago by the death of an unmarried mother. She had spent her childhood in foundling home and orphanage. At fourteen she had rebelled against a matron and, remembering the aunt whose name her mother had whispered to her so fearfully that it had left a scar of unspoken dread of this Delila Jameison, she had lifted courage in both hands and had run away over half a continent to Circle R.

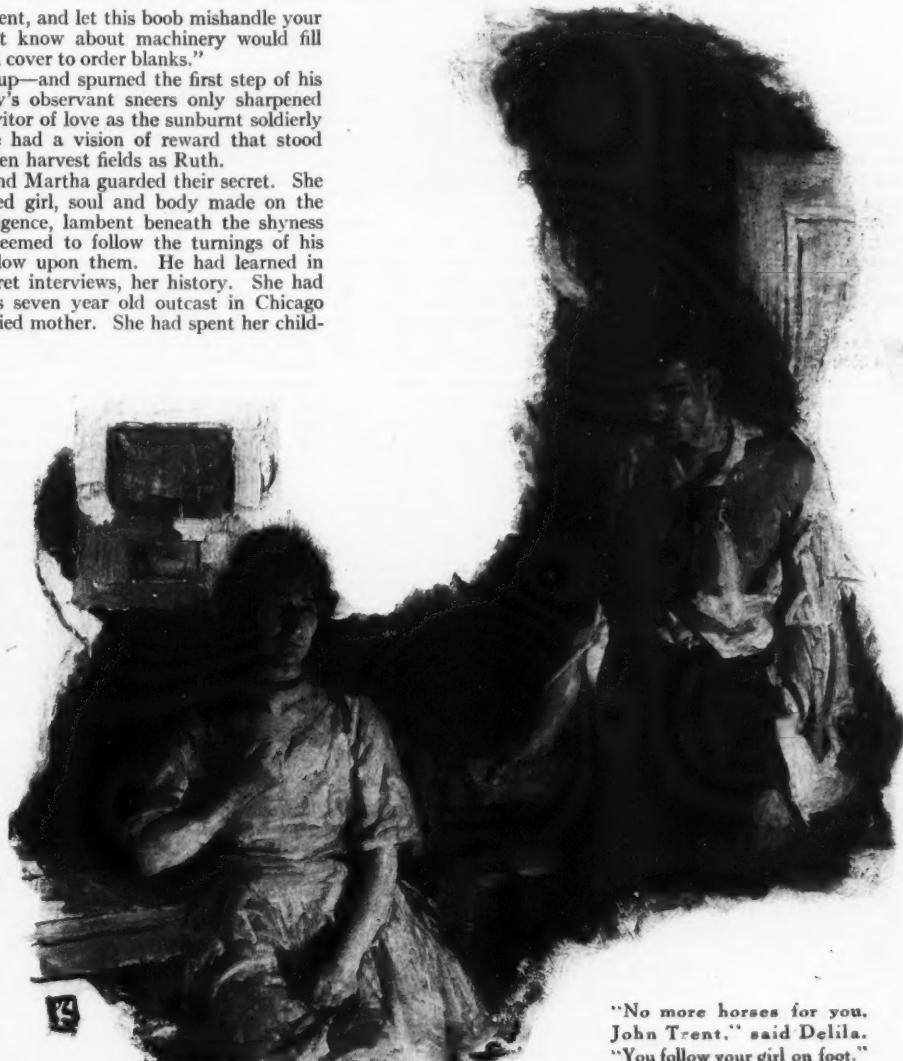
Recalling his own sensations when he first stood before Delila, John Trent exclaimed: "You must have wished yourself back in the orphanage when you saw your aunt!"

Martha tilted up to him the honest amazement of her eyes. "Why, no. I was scared until I saw her. And then I couldn't understand why mother hadn't sent me to her straight. Aunt Lila might have been ashamed of me. But she just gave me one look-over and said:

"You've the Jameison chin and yellow eyes. Go wash up my dishes, Marty!"

The eyes of the eagle? Oh no! thought Trent—dark, soft and tender eyes, golden only when the sun crept into their secrecy. There was nothing of the eagle about his girl. She might suggest a feather from the great swooping wing; a light, clean, drifting feather—no more of the eagle nature than that. Even her quick intelligence had none of Delila's pouncing, preying swiftness. It followed stronger flights with pretty sweeps and turnings like a swallow's after dusk. The two women occupied his whole imagination in the intense, narrow but wonderfully complete absorption of his life. The mountain range had chopped his existence in two.

That autumn chance gave his fortunes an upward jolt. During the summer he had had occasional experience with cattle on the range; he had proved himself a horseman and betrayed a natural eye for stock; so, when an epidemic of "flu" struck the valley and Delila's cleverest man, Carey, as well as her trustiest, Mac Campbell, were laid on their backs, she blindfolded caution, yielded to intuition as even an eagle woman will, and sent Trent out over the hill in charge of the October drive. He took out his steers in the face of a driving wind, met a blizzard in the canyon and, in spite of the unwilling obedience of his lieutenants, minded to show this upstart where self-confidence falls over on its nose—he came back to Circle R with the record of a good sale and not a steer lost. He came back, besides, with a frost-bitten cheek, a gaunt body and a new permanent line between his eyebrows.



"No more horses for you, John Trent," said Delila.
"You follow your girl on foot."

He sat with Delila that night before her stove in consultation. He had, on his journey, fallen in and out again with Van Breuwen; also, he had a suggestion to make concerning that property, so close to hers, so valuable, so mismanaged by the heavy witted Dutchman.

And late, very late, creaking home over the dry snow to the bunk house, where Dandy ruled and made his refuge thorny, he whistled softly under Martha's window, and in the frosty stillness governed by the icy mountain peaks, their breath mounting in silver feathers, the stars clamorous with leaping light, he knew the exquisite warm reality of her kiss. He wanted to speak to her then, but she put her cheek across his mouth, whispering "Hush! Hush!" as if words would hurt her quivering silence like the crudity of blows.

In winter, when Martha, obedient to Delila, pulled herself out of her lover's life and went down the valley for schooling, Trent's blood mounted from his hollow heart to his wits and, with Delila's confidence, he schemed. The bank, it appeared, had refused Van Breuwen a loan. A dry summer, followed by a long feeding season, left many ranchmen in the valley ruined that spring and Van Breuwen must have "gone under" if the bank, after a secret consultation with Trent as Circle R's representative, had not placed a short and heavy mortgage on his land. There followed another bad summer; the price of steers crashed. In November, her cattle driven out and sold, her grain and hay safely in her barns and stacks, Delila made a feast to the countryside. Van Breuwen was not invited. Circle R was celebrating the acquisition of his ranch. The mortgage had been foreclosed and it came then to light that Circle R was back of the loan and now stretched itself for another two thousand acres. The valley shrunk about it to a fringe.

Perhaps Van Breuwen, that November day, prowling about his ranch house, traced down the persecution to its source and remembered with some ruefulness his insult to a dark-eyed girl. At her last and most resolute refusal of his hand he had said: "You've lost your chance to be respectable—I'll make you what your mother was—". He had left her trembling, so white that her little freckles stood out black against the fine skin, tears burning across her cheeks, her fists clenched. The next time he had seen Trent the young man's face had been like marble. And Trent was Circle R's representative all over the valley—curse him! Why wouldn't the coward fight like a man with his fists instead of stealing a fellow's land—and girl—from him? So Van Breuwen, alone, lumbered to and fro like a wounded bear, his blue eyes bloodshot and his face reddened with drink.

For Delila Jameison the acquisition of his ranch was a royal dream of diplomacy fulfilled.

Having helped in kitchen and living room since the crack of day—a bleak and shallow crack between stone-colored clouds and snow-streaked mountains—the head of Circle R withdrew to dress herself in all that was most magnificent. Satisfied presently with her appearance, she went to sit in the small counting house, to which her pine board table had been removed to make room for the festival. She folded her hands together and silently exulted. She wore a purple silk dress, cut to a V, and changing where it rustled into gold. Her gray-streaked heavy hair was dressed high on her head, her throat was banded with twinkling jet.Flushed, with brilliant yellow eyes, she had a regal presence. Jeff Carey, knocking too softly, stepped in and moistened his lips once before he pushed to the door behind him.

Jeff's own magnificence of crimson scarf, silk shirt, studded belt, new overalls and beaded boots accentuated his snaky slenderness and the narrow pallor of his face and eyes. He came nervously across the floor and stood beside her, bending down a little, speaking in the voice of conspiracy, sugar-sweet but vibrantly suggestive of alarm.

"I'd like a word with you, ma'am, before"—he jerked his head towards the adjoining room—"the show begins."

She smiled and bowed her head.

Jeff cleared his throat and a slow flush mounted against his will across his face.

"Does anyone but you, ma'am, know the combination of that safe?"

They both glanced across the room to the clumsy old-fashioned receptacle of what wealth Delila kept in the ranch house. Her face had changed and her eyes were very shrewd.

"John Trent—yes."

"Well, ma'am—I've been suspecting that fellow. I haven't said nothing to you because you seemed so set on him. He's a good looker—likely any woman would—" He hastened, stumbling before the queer expression which had come about her lips: "But I've been watching him—the boys hev watched

him some, too. They're good boys and every last man of them's my friend. You can ask the bunk house what it thinks of Trent—and me. Well, ma'am—I've got my evidence. In the box under his bed Trent's hidden a wad of cash—the boys' pay. Find out for yourself if he ain't plannin' to make his getaway tonight."

Delila rose, strode with steps too long for the cut of her scant, ankle length skirt and too heavy for the build of her high heeled slippers, to the safe, where she twirled the knob, swung back the door and made a brief inspection. She shut the safe with a sharp click.

"He's taken the money, sure enough, Jeff," she said, smiling thinly. "He knows the combination, but—he left the safe open for ten minutes yesterday when I called him out to see Marin. That was right careless of him. I told him so. He said there wasn't anyone about and he ran back and shut it quickly. I heard the bang. He didn't stop to look inside before he shut the safe. Well, sir"—here she began to drawl terribly—"I guess he took the cash all right unless during those ten minutes some other candidate for foreman's been smart enough to take it out and load him up with it."

Silence occupied the room like a full-bodied visitor. They could hear the slow cold wind singing about the cabin corners.

"After dinner's over, when some of our guests have gone, you can come in here and face me—and Trent—with that story, Jeff. Until then—use your tongue for eating, and don't go back to the bunk house. You're pretty enough now for any party—pretty enough to fool any woman under fifty."

She appraised the smoothly departing figure. "Trent weighs about thirty pound heavier than you and he's studied fightin'. I can tell by his eyes and the way he moves his hands when he's angry. I'm always scared of a man that isn't very ready with his fists. Eat a good dinner, Jeff—and try the punch. It tastes fine."

She laughed, the rarest of her articulations, smote the council table with her hand and, biting at her lip, followed Carey into the long room where her guests were gathering to Trent's welcome before a big and blazing hearth.

Martha, in blue crêpe, arms bare to the elbow, ankles and feet trim in white cotton stockings and black cross-strapped slippers, drifted about the table with dazed bright eyes, her cheeks as warm as June. Not once had Trent looked at her. Their long secret, as skilfully conducted as a court intrigue, lay like a nest under branches in their united consciousness. But Trent's face, above his sober flannel collar, gleamed.

The afternoon now was about three hours old; neighboring ranchmen and their wives, boys of Circle R with girls, boys and girls, of other brands, faces brown and rough, wind-burnt eyes, marshaled themselves about the board which stretched the full length of the long warm room. Firelight danced forgetful of the cruelly singing wind and the dark sky. Delila at one end of the table and Trent was bidden with her familiar bugle note of command to put himself at the other. He looked a little startled. There were dark faces as well as bright ones turned to watch him take that place. Much eating followed, and little talk. When Circle R feasts, the food's the thing. Martha and her companions grew rosier with swift, untiring service. Delila ate royally but drank little. There was punch of considerable potency.

After two hours of steady plying of her guests with food, the hostess stood up there against her logs. They all looked to her and their eyes recognized, perhaps, some of the woman's trammeled greatness. She made her announcements, smiling along the table, showing her splendid teeth.

"Circle R has spread its wings, folks, to cover the neighboring homestead. The Lazy O brand has joined the Circle R. Van Breuwen's sold out."

Van Breuwen's unpopularity fanned up a loud applause.

"I have also to announce," went on Delila, "the appointment of a foreman to my joint property. I want to name the man who has done more for my interests and my ambitions during the past eighteen months than any boy that ever drew my pay . . . John Trent."

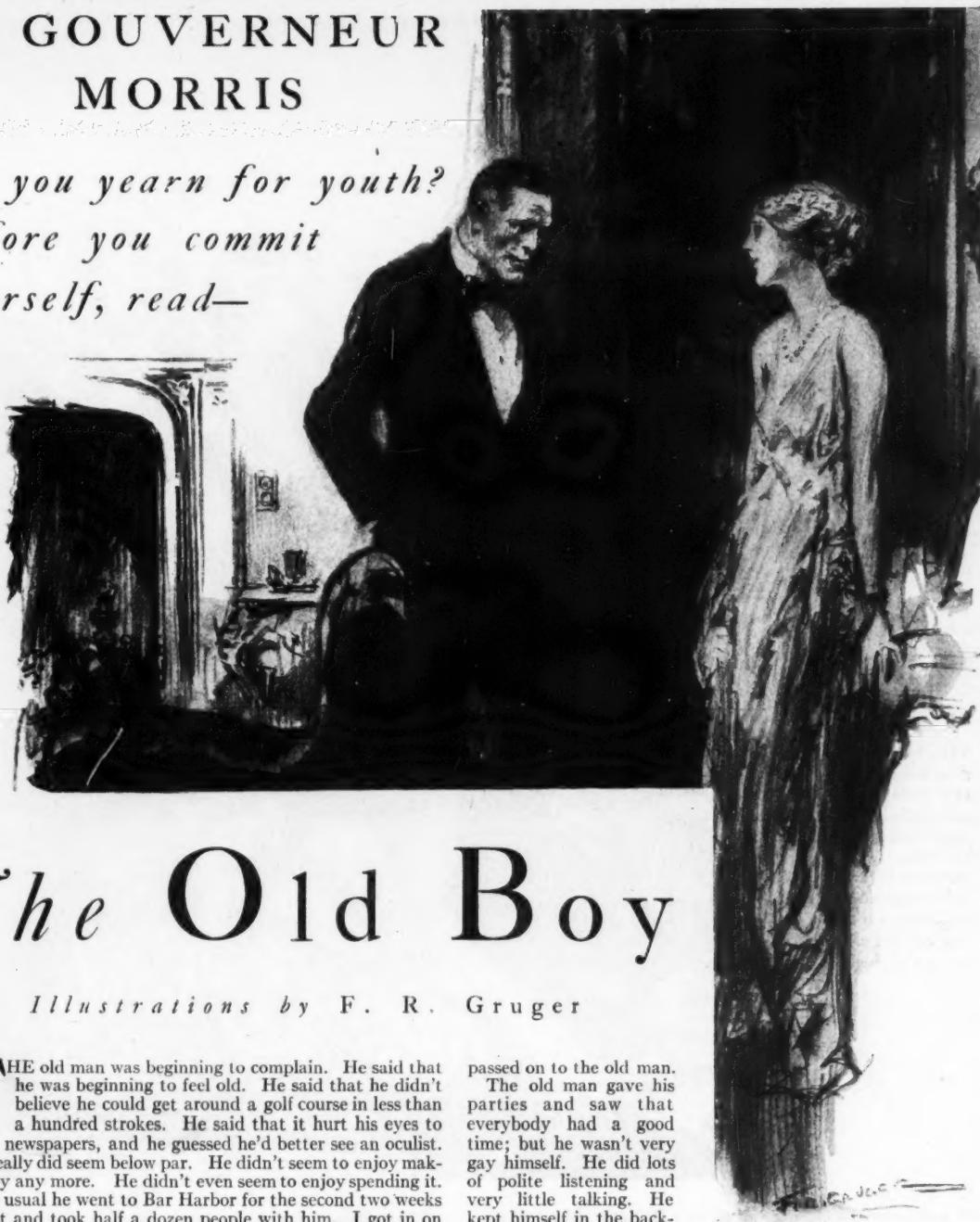
Punch, holiday feeling, the comfort of satisfied digestion, as well as admiration, male and female, for the suddenly pale young prime minister, helped to swell throats and drown the silences of envy.

Trent rose and briefly, almost shyly, spoke. He praised his eagle mistress. He told them it was "a good outfit to work for," that such a leader as Miss Jameison made work—he faltered and used a phrase that startled his hearers—"a sharp delight." The eagle eyes understood. He read their wifeliness.

But down in his silent heart, forgetful (*Continued on page 145*)

By GOUVERNEUR MORRIS

*Do you yearn for youth?
Before you commit
yourself, read—*



The Old Boy

Illustrations by F. R. Gruger

THE old man was beginning to complain. He said that he was beginning to feel old. He said that he didn't believe he could get around a golf course in less than a hundred strokes. He said that it hurt his eyes to read the newspapers, and he guessed he'd better see an oculist. And he really did seem below par. He didn't seem to enjoy making money any more. He didn't even seem to enjoy spending it. But as usual he went to Bar Harbor for the second two weeks in August and took half a dozen people with him. I got in on the party because Smash, the first secretary, was sick, and before we came back Smash married, and after that the old man always took me around with him.

The weather was fine down East, nights not too cold and no fog, and the old man did a lot of entertaining. He didn't want to, he said, he was getting too old, but then he always had and people expected it of him. There doesn't seem to be anything that people like better than to be entertained on a fine yacht. And of course the Buccaneer isn't just a fine yacht. She's the fine yacht. There isn't another in the world so big and black and ocean-going, and graceful and fast and shiny.

And as for entertainment—well, you could play roulette or poker without any limit, or you could smoke Cuban cigars as big as baseball bats, and I might as well confess that in spite of Prohibition, if there was any particular kind of forbidden thing that you wanted to drink all you had to do was ask for it. But if all you wanted was a cup of tea, why even that would be brewed from leaves which the late Empress of China had given to the late Tsar of Russia, and which the late Tsar of Russia had

passed on to the old man.

The old man gave his parties and saw that everybody had a good time; but he wasn't very gay himself. He did lots of polite listening and very little talking. He kept himself in the background, and right in the midst of things he'd slip off quietly and go to bed.

I heard people saying that he'd changed terribly.

He'd gotten so quiet. He'd lost his big hearty laugh. "When he thinks nobody's looking at him," one woman said, "he kind of sinks into himself and looks wistful." And I heard one man say: "It's natural enough. The old man is a whole lot older than any of you think he is, and he's beginning to wake up to the fact that he's just about all through."

That made me smile; because I happened to know just exactly how old the old man really was. My first job with him was to help catalogue the library and I ran across the family Bible. It had the date of his birth in it, and the name of the little New England town where he was born. That summer at Bar Harbor he passed his fifty-third birthday.

He'd invited some people out to dinner one night, and afterward they and the yacht guests were to go ashore to a fancy

The old man looked at Miss Pembroke as so much beauty, so much youth, so much fascination.

The old man gave his parties and saw that everybody had a good time; but he wasn't very gay himself, and right in the midst of things he'd slip off quietly and go to bed.



ball and leave the old man all alone. Of course he could have gone to the ball too, but he didn't want to. Said he didn't think he'd ever met the people who were giving it, and that if he had met them he kind of remembered that he hadn't liked them. And anyway he was too old to dress himself all up like something that he wasn't and look ridiculous.

Well, one of the women who came out to dinner was a stranger to the old man. She was a Miss Pembroke. He gave one look at her and then he sent for me and told me quietly to have the place cards changed. "Put Miss Pembroke on my right," he said.

She was the first woman he'd taken any interest in for a long time. She wasn't more than twenty years old. She had a rich, joyous voice, and so much youth and sparkle and beauty that she made the other women look like ghosts. And that's saying a good deal, because with the exception of one ancient maiden lady, who had a tongue dipped in pure wit, the old man wouldn't allow an old woman or an ugly woman anywhere near him.

He loved beauty, and more than beauty he loved youth. Miss Pembroke was both.

48

Before dinner was half over she had the old man's famous laugh ringing out as if nothing had ever gone wrong with it. Before dinner was all over she took exception to the fact that he wasn't going to the ball, and she gave him one look and said, "Of course you are going."

He smiled and looked surprised and then he said, "Am I? Really?"

And she said, "You *are*."

That settled it. He went.

II

WHEN the old man was feeling right and any kind of proposition came before him for judgment, he'd take in all the facts the way a dry sponge takes in water, and right on top of that he'd make his decision one way or the other. Sometimes he thought things out wrong, I guess, but always he thought them out quickly.

In the matter of Miss Pembroke he pulled himself together and gave a flash of his old methods. He looked at her probably



upset him so that he didn't think it was decent to play games, and when the war was over, if it is over, he felt shy about starting in again and doing badly the things that he'd always done well. So he'd been out of golf and tennis and swimming for eight years, and it was mighty tough work for him to get back into them. He'd settled and softened in those eight years.

Two days after he met Miss Pembroke he was so stiff that he could hardly get out of bed in the morning, and he had blisters on both hands and both feet and a peeling nose. But he'd hung on to some of his old skill and knowledge, and at that he hadn't made a holy show of himself. He'd be a dead man when he went to bed at night, and he'd be half dead when he got up in the morning; but he'd pull himself together and doll himself up and step out on to the first tee of the Kebo Valley Club with quick, alert steps and a smiling face.

People said he was wonderful; that he had the endurance and elasticity of a boy. But he hadn't really. All that he had was an infatuation for a very beautiful and athletic girl, and courage.

But he drew the line at mountain climbing. She wanted him to climb Newport with her on the ocean side. But he wouldn't. And he gave his reasons frankly and simply:

"I'm one of the living proofs," he said, "that Byron is right and that man isn't descended from a monkey. Even when I was a little boy I couldn't climb a cherry tree. I have heightphobia. I can look at the ground from a first story window but I can't look at it from a second story window. I don't even like to think of looking at the ground from a second story window. I can't tell you just what it does to me; but it's very horrid."

So they walked up Duck Brook instead. And I think they got engaged on that walk; because that night the old man seemed to forget how tired he was, and carried on all the evening like a two year old.

III

HE WROTE to her every day and she wrote to him; but they did not see each other again until the autumn. She came then to be with friends at Piping Rock and of course the old man could be with her every day.

But in the meanwhile he'd kept up the games that she'd started him on and had hired an ex-prize fighter to stick around and train him. And he did manage to get into wonderful

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as a kind of proposition: so much beauty, so much youth, so much fascination, so much good breeding, etc., etc., and on the other side he probably figured that for a man of his age she was too young and too good looking and much too attractive to other men who weren't half his age. Considering all the advantages and considering all the risks, was the proposition one that he wanted to fool with or wasn't it?

Well, of course I've no way of proving it, but I'm sure enough that within twenty-four hours of meeting Miss Pembroke for the first time, the old man had made up his mind to marry her.

Miss Pembroke looked as if she was made of hothouse peaches and Devonshire cream. As a matter of fact she was made of whipcord and leather. She didn't like to sit in big chairs out of the sun and be made love to. She liked to play tennis in the morning, swim afterward, dance at the Casino for twenty minutes before luncheon, golf in the afternoon, climb mountains on Sundays and dance again all night.

Now no man old or young can sit by and watch his darling go through her paces. The old man had been a fine athlete in his day, and he'd kept going until the war broke out. The war

The Old Boy

condition for a man of his age. But age is age for all that, and it takes more than scientific exercising and deep breathing and massage and cold showers to set the clock back.

I wouldn't want to criticise the old man; he was always white to me. But from the time he got discontented with his age and began trying to make himself young, he lost some quality that I'd always liked and admired. There'd been a wonderful, philosophical, restful dignity about him, and that was all gone now. So was his repose. He'd acquired an abrupt, jerky manner, and the kind of clothes that go with it. His man told me in confidence that the old man had taken to sleeping in a chamois mask lined with cold cream.

Somehow you can't help admiring a woman who puts up a good fight to keep herself young. But it's different with a man. The fact that he should actually resent growing old kind of knocks the manliness out of him. A man is supposed to take what's coming to him, as, and when, it comes. At least that's the way I feel. But then I'm young. Maybe I'd feel different if I loved somebody the way the old man loved Miss Pembroke, and wanted her to have everything that a beautiful young girl ought to have—including a young husband.

Winter came and Miss Pembroke followed the golf and tennis as far south as Aiken. But the old man was obliged to stick around New York. The market was active and he couldn't get away. But he made all his plans to hit Palm Beach just about the time she did.

She'd no sooner gone south than he came down with a hard cold, and he had to call on all his renewed youth to shake it. And it left him pale and pulled down and worried.

The doctor came every day to blow the old man's nose out with salt and water, to spray his throat and run a vibrator up and down his spine. Sometimes the doctor stayed to dinner, and they'd have long talks in the library afterwards.

One night the doctor brought some other doctor and they were shut up with the old man for a long time.

He didn't go downtown the next day. He just sat around and walked around and was very quiet and absent-minded. The second day he sent for his lawyers and I was called in to witness his signature on a document. I suppose it was a will. But they didn't tell me.

Then for two days running the old man went downtown. The day after that he sent for me and told me that he was going to the hospital—the doctor's private hospital. He said it was nothing serious, that he would be laid up only a week and that he expected to be greatly benefited. He told me not to tell anyone where he'd gone. If it leaked out that he was sick the sickness would be exaggerated and there might be bad times on Wall Street. I was to come to the hospital every morning for orders, or between times if anything really important turned up.

That hospital was in a funny part of town, for a hospital, way over near the East River. You could have got to it by boat if you'd wanted to. It was in a house that had been a fine Colonial mansion in its day, but all done over now in white tiles and white enamel. It wasn't easy to get in. There was a negro who'd look out at you through a little wicket in the front door, and ask your business, and shut the wicket, and go away, and come back, and pull a lot of bolts and let down chains and let you in.

I saw the old man the morning after he'd gone to the hospital. And he was a sick looking man. He looked as gray and as fragile as cigar ashes. He didn't say but a few words.

I'd brought a letter that had come from Miss Pembroke, and he told me to lay it on the medicine stand; said he'd read it later. And then he forced a smile and nodded for me to go away and not bother him.

The next morning he looked even worse. And he was having an attack of hiccoughs, due to sheer weakness. But he was more talkative. He said he was going to be all right. "They used a local anaesthetic," he explained, "so I had no real shock; but I could hear them cutting and it made me nervous."

Then he lifted a weak hand, and pointing toward the room at his right, he said:

"How's Smith?"

And the doctor answered, offhand and very quickly: "Don't worry about Smith. He's all right."

I'd said good by to him and stepped out into the hall with the doctor, when the negro came running up the stairs in his soft rubber-soled shoes and pulled the doctor aside and whispered to him. The doctor gave him some instructions and he turned and went back down the stairs. Then the doctor said to me: "Would you mind stepping into this room for a moment?"—

here he turned the handle of a door. It was the door of the room toward which the old man had pointed when he asked about "Smith."

"There's a new patient arrived," the doctor explained. "You undoubtedly would know him by sight, and—well, he doesn't want to be seen. He doesn't want anyone to know where he is—not even so discreet a young man as yourself. Do you mind?"

I said, "No, of course I didn't," and went into the room and heard the door close behind me.

It was just such a room as the old man had, but the shades were pulled and at first I didn't notice that there was something lying on the bed with a sheet over it. "Smith," I thought. Well, Smith instead of being all right had died and they'd put me in the room with him.

But it was natural enough for the doctor to have told the old man that Smith was all right. You don't tell one very sick man that his neighbor has died. It's too discouraging.

I'd never been alone with a corpse before and it made me feel embarrassed and uncomfortable. But in a few moments I got used to it and didn't mind.

Then, for it was quite a time before the doctor came and said that it was all right for me to come out, I began to get curious—curious to see what Smith looked like. And I couldn't see what harm there'd be in taking a look, and so after a little hesitation I walked close to the bed and took hold of the sheet and lifted the head end of it and looked underneath.

I don't know much about such things or which is which; but the thing under the sheet—the thing they had called Smith—wasn't a man. It was some kind of a big ape.

I let the sheet drop and tip-toed to the door, as close to the door as I could get, and waited for the doctor to come and let me out.

IV

NEXT morning the old man was better. Wonderfully better. He'd lived through a horrible day of hiccoughing, and about midnight his nerves had suddenly stopped dancing and he'd slipped off into a deep, quiet sleep. He'd had eggs and coffee for breakfast. His eye was bright and clear. He said that he felt like a new man.

It was a beautiful sunny morning, and he asked me to push the window up all the way. And I stood for a moment looking out over the river.

The old man's room was in the second story of the house, but the house stood on what had been the original bank of the river, and this had been shorn clear and faced with granite masonry so that the window was really a long way from the ground. Two days later I had occasion to remember this; for when I came into the room the old man, in his dressing wrapper, was standing where I had stood at the open window, and leaning out and looking down.

He whipped around when he heard me come in, with the expression of a little boy who's been caught in a mischief, and then he laughed.

"Something's happened to my eyes," he said. "I don't seem to mind heights any more."

He was tickled to death, like a child with a new toy. And he was just going to show me how far out he could lean without being bothered when the doctor came in.

The doctor was very cheerful, and rubbing his hands together, and altogether happy and voluble. But the way he addressed the old man gave me an awful shock. It seemed to me so disrespectful and familiar.

"Well," he said, "how's the boy?"

But the old man didn't seem to mind. He laughed and said:

"The boy is fine and dandy, thank you! But by the way"—here he jerked his thumb over his shoulder as if indicating the next room—"how is Smith?"

Then he giggled as if he and the doctor had some amusing secret together. But although the doctor pretended to be amused I could see that he wasn't, not altogether.

"Oh," he said, "Smith's all right! Smith's got nothing to worry him."

This seemed to strike the old man as a wonderful joke. He put back his head and roared. Then he said:

"I guess that's right. He's got nothing to worry him except money."

It was all over my head and beyond my understanding.

Then the old man stopped laughing and said:

"We ought not to laugh. Smith's going to find out that money isn't everything—poor fellow."



Curious, I lifted the head end of the sheet and saw the thing they called Smith.

The next day the old man left the hospital. I called for him in a closed car and drove him home. He was in high spirits.

"Surgeons are wonderful," he said, "but I do hate a hospital—when you're feeling pretty low yourself and have to listen to the noises of those who feel worse." He filled his lungs full of air and smiled in a gay way.

"I don't even feel weak. I don't feel as if I'd ever be

tired again—— By Gawd, there's a pretty pair of ankles——"

I'd never before seen him so interested in the streets and in the crowds. Usually when he drove about town he never looked to the right or left. But now his eyes were all over looking at everything. And he wasn't a bit like himself.

"I never noticed how many pretty women there are in New York," he said. "Look at that girl (Continued on page 119)



THIS WAY UP



Young Richard Kinsella was highly ambitious,
He wanted to be a success.
And, knowing that fortune was often capricious
With moods that aren't easy to guess,
He read all the books and the magazines too
That tell a young fellow what course to pursue.
"Work hard," was the counsel he read, "work and save,
Be modest and thrifty and always behave
With such circumspection as never to shock
The most puritanic and—don't watch the clock!
Be up every morning at six, as a rule,
Don't waste precious evenings at poker or pool,
But spend the time fitting
Yourself for your job
And do not be flitting
Around with the mob
Who dance and who frivol like gay butterflies
—But be like the bee if you're hoping to rise."

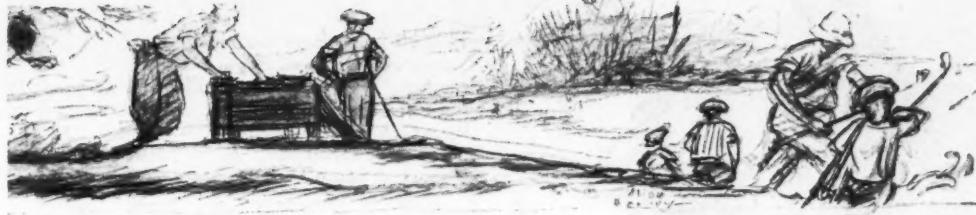
Equipped with such copybook maxims as these
Our hero came into Manhattan one day
Prepared at the earliest moment to seize
The first opportunity coming his way.
Next day at five-thirty he rose to partake
Of coffee and oatmeal and rolls;
The city, he noticed, was not yet awake
Except for some nondescript souls
Who stood on the corner, awaiting a car;
They certainly were not successes, by far.
Dick boarded the subway and traveled downtown
To seek for a firm of whose world-wide renown
He'd frequently heard, and with worthy ambition
He hoped he might find there a humble position.

The people he rode with looked more or less seedy,
They mostly were workmen and such,
Together with other folks threadbare and needy
Who'd never amounted to much,
And Richard Kinsella remarked to himself,
"Say, where are the people with power and pelf?"
I used "pelf" to rhyme, but Dick's actual crack
Was "Where are the guys who are making the jack?"

The office he sought for was closed, and a sign
Announced that it opened at quarter to nine.
But Dick thought "I'll wait;
For I'm willing to state
That the early bird's here—it's the worm who is late."
At last the place opened and Richard went in.
The office boys gave him an impudent grin,
But after some moments a pretty girl came
Who asked him his business, along with his name.
And Dick came across
Then asked "Where's the boss?
I've waited around since some time before seven!"
"The boss," smiled the girl, "seldom comes till eleven."
"I'll wait," announced Richard, and picked out a chair.

For two hours or thereabouts, Richard was there,
While clerks and stenographers came in and out.
Our hero, however, kept looking about
Observing that all of the women and men
Who seemed to be "somebodies" blew in at ten
Or later, perhaps;
"They've surely got snaps,"
He said to the girl at the desk. "Well, you see
They've also got pretty good brains!" answered she.
Eleven o'clock—and the boss sauntered in.





By BERTON BRALEY

Illustrations by Alice Harvey

He looked like an athlete with sun-tempered skin.
He glanced at our hero and strolled on inside.
"That's him," said the girl in a tone of some pride.

"I'll see if he'll see you."
She shortly returned.
"I'm afraid he can't see you," was all that Dick learned,
"He's busy this morning, and this afternoon,
He's dated for golf, so if you'd just as soon
Perhaps you will try
Some day by and by—"
"I'll come in tomorrow," our hero remarked,
And rose from the chair where so long he had parked.
"All right," said the girl, but she didn't tell Dick
That the boss had said, "I haven't time for that hick!"

Young Richard Kinsella kept up his attack,
And day after day he came back and came back
But all his persistency netted a loss.
He couldn't succeed in approaching the boss.
However, the girl, on his plight taking pity,
And knowing Kinsella was new to the city,
Was cordially nice to him;
So in good time
She gave her advice to him,
Telling him, "I'm
Your friend, Dick Kinsella, so listen, old bean.
Those clothes that you're sporting aren't fit to be seen,
Forget all those copybooks,
Silly old sloppy books—
Take it from me in these few simple words,
A bunch of fine feathers don't injure fine birds!
You go out tomorrow,
And beg, steal or borrow
Enough of the rhino to buy you some duds—
Something with style and with verve and with pep—



Then, when you look like the best of young bloods,
Come back to Mabel and I'll put you hep,
Hep to the game and the way it is played
Here in these centers of business and trade!"

(2)

Out of the hoard
Which he had saved for his bed and his board.
(Bed at the "Y" and his meals at a beanery)
Richard, with Mabel's aid, purchased new scenery.
Thus equipped, young Mr. Richard Kinsella
Certainly looked like a "regular fella."
"Now," observed Mabel, "I'll show you a few things.
We'll go and mix with the people who do things."
She took him to ball games, she took him to shows
She took him to smart cabarets,
She showed him the country clubs, which, heaven knows
Are costly in various ways;
On Saturdays, Sundays,
(The popular fun-days)
She took him to beaches
Where smart people swim,
And he viewed the peaches
Gay, graceful and slim,
And husky young tritons, and dowagers stout,
Whose high powered autos were parked all about.
Young Richard looked over these seekers of pleasure
And said, "These are millionaires, people of leisure,
Folks who've inherited
Fortunes unmerited;
Why don't you show me the kind who are stressful
Builders and makers of business successful?"





Men who toil busily,
Twelve hours a day
Not these who dizzily
Frolic and play.
Nix on these gay
Loafers and shirkers
Take 'em away.

Show me the workers!
Show me the planners of big vital schemes,
Men in whom worthy accomplishment gleams!"
Thereupon Mabel gave Richard a jar,
"Look all about you," she laughed, "here they are!

"These are the people
Who raise the skyscrapers,
Build the church steeple
And edit the papers;
Don't you be fooled by the magazine junk—
Books on success and that species of bunk;
Brains and ideas are really what count,
These folks have got 'em—in any amount!
That's why they've money to spend in their play;
They make it—thinking for four hours a day.
Never you mind what their canny biographers
Write for the sake of ambitious stenographers,
Clerks and young people who long for success—
Stuff about twelve hours a day, more or less.
Dope that says plodding's the way to advance:
—These are the gamblers who took a long chance,
Backed up their hunch
With nerve and with grit
Used all their punch
And vigor and wit,
Played the game bravely for all they were worth
And now they are running this part of the earth!

"I also might add,
Young Richard, me lad,
That many a deal that makes millions," quoth Mabel,
"Is made on the golf course, or over a table;
For Business is Business—but this, too, is so:
Folks like to do business with people they know,
And playing with people—it can't be denied—
Will help you a lot when you come to decide
Just what sort of character they may possess!"
"I get you," said Richard, "although I confess
It comes as a bit of a shock after all
The stuff about 'reaching success' I recall.
But somehow I rather believe you are right,
I've got a new slant, and I've seen a great light,
I'll risk all my wad—though it isn't so much—
On getting in touch
With people who count in this Manhattan game,
And see if that method is all that you claim."

Though fresh from the farm
Young Richard had charm
And something that made people like him at once;
—I haven't the space to relate all the stunts

By which he got in with

A smart social set

Almost to begin with;

And presently met

The man whom in vain he'd attempted to see
—In brief, Mabel's boss. It was luck, you'll agree.
And yet—maybe luck isn't quite the right term;
For Dick was the early bird seeking the worm;
And, failing to catch him the regular way,
Had captured him, unaware, during his play.

The boss took to Dick
(Whom he'd called "a hick")

And when next our hero was destined to cross
That office he'd parked in—he came with the Boss!

But little remains
That needs to be told,

Kinsella had brains

And his hunches were bold.

The boss liked his daring (because it made money)
And Richard's career is exceedingly sunny;
For four hours a day in his office you'll find him
And there about business he capably thinks,
And then, with his strenuous labors behind him,
He goes to the tennis courts or to the links,
Where frequently, after a number of sets,
Or after a "round" he successfully gets
Quite chummy with men who, he knows, are an aid
To building up business and giving him trade.
His wife—yes, it's Mabel—is helping him write
His autobiography, which, so I hear
Advises young people to work day and night
To save and be thrifty—for Richard, I fear,
Now he has risen to moderate fame,
Isn't giving away any tricks of the game!



ELINOR GLYN *on*

Living *With a* Difficult Husband



WHENEVER has a "difficult" husband has to humor him. The tragedy which very few men realize is that the moment a woman has to humor a man she unconsciously loses respect for him, even if she goes on loving him in a protective sort of way; because the possibility of his answering to humoring implies either vanity or weakness, and however tolerant of his faults the conscious mind may be, the subconscious mind recognizes the truth and feels contempt. A man might very well ask himself, therefore, whether he wants his wife to despise him before he permits himself to become "difficult."

When a woman marries a man, even after the shortest acquaintance, she must have some idea of what his character is. It seems to me that it can be only in books, where situations are created to meet the exigencies of the story, that total changes in men occur after marriage, and that simple lambs turn into Bluebeards and delightful companions become morose tyrants.

In real life surely any observant person could get the general "hang"—so to speak—of the character of an ordinary man; and as we are considering the question broadly, it is of the ordinary man we must judge.

I do not mean that the troubles of matrimony or the waning of love do not alter people, because of course they do. What I mean is that there are certain fundamental qualities which remain, and these, except in the cases of deliberate arch deceivers, must have been evident in the beginning; such qualities as generosity, jealousy, arrogance, egotism, vanity, pettiness. About truth or honor a woman could hardly be certain because both these qualities are looked at by the male mind from a different standpoint when dealing with women to what they are in the abstract, or when dealing with men.

But to discuss that interesting point would be a long story.

Therefore we must start this discussion by supposing that

Margaret has a general idea of George—greatly exaggerated as to the good side if she is in love—when she marries him. But although she may have remarked that he is mean over little things, or selfish to others even though he may be a slave to herself, or easily flattered, or avaricious, or weak of will—still, she has glossed over all his faults and so has not faced the idea that he is going to turn into a "difficult" husband. She marries him; and afterwards he becomes this tiresome bore, making the days uncomfortable and filling the atmosphere with discontent.

Now what is she to do about it?

Every woman has some grain of tact because it goes back to the self-preservation instinct, which through the ages has instilled cunning into woman to oppose the brute force she had to fight.

Therefore that sixth sense, that intuition, is in every female in some degree, and she can never be so completely impervious to things, people or events as man can.

But the subconscious and basic motive of all human actions is to follow nature's laws; in the case of woman, this means to secure a mate and to reproduce. Civilization is responsible for countless diversifications and perversions, and for atrophying or exaggerating these instincts, but they can always be found if the probe goes deep enough.

So that once the woman has fulfilled the first of them—that is, secured the mate—her sixth sense in regard to him automatically loses its alertness, and indeed is often allowed to sleep.

Thus a girl seemingly tactful during the engagement can become an apparently tactless woman so far as her husband is concerned. All this quite unconsciously; but that in itself may cause some of his "difficulties."

The case with man is different, because nature is continually prompting him to be unfaithful, and it is only the effects of civilization and custom upon the subconscious mind for generations



that enable him to remain constant at all. So unless he is deeply in love and the woman is not too ardent, so that his desire to keep her instinctively suggests cunning to him, he is at no pains to use tact in his relation to his wife; and in nine cases out of ten if he is that kind of man he just indulges his "difficultness" without trying to alter himself.

Now to get to the practical question of living with a "difficult" husband:

Margaret must first decide clearly what her aim in the affair is.

It is very seldom that women, or indeed any human beings—I say human beings, not just "men," because we have agreed in a former article that there is a third sex of neuters evolving—will face what actually is their aim, and what is the motive principle for their actions. They throw dust in their own eyes all the time, and either never analyze at all or call their motive what they would like it to be rather than what it truly is.

So that Margaret, who we will suppose has an almost impossible husband to live with, would have to ask herself these questions fearlessly:

1. Does she want to break away and get rid of him?
2. Does she want to make things smooth and live with him in peace?

3. Or does she so desire to express her own personality that so long as she can do that, quarrels or peace are really secondary considerations?

Most probably she will hate doing this self-analysis, but it will be the only way to get anywhere near deciding the question.

Now let us begin with number one, which we will suppose

she has discovered to be her *real* desire after facing things.

She has found George to be impossible. She has grown so to despise his unreasonableness or his irritating idiosyncrasies that she would rather chuck the whole thing and be off. She had better put it before him, and if he will not or seemingly cannot change, then she had better apply for a separation.

But perhaps there are children, so that although Margaret's real desire is to leave him, her interest in the children makes her waive it. Then she should use the whole of her woman's natural instinct and her acquired reason in her endeavor to discover just what so irritates her in George, and what are the probable causes of his behaving in certain ways.

We will suppose that she then discovers some of the trouble is due to the wounding of her own vanity and not to intentional meanness on his part; that some is really due to contemptible faults in his character; and that some is due to the fact that she herself often "riles" him. Whatever the cause may be, she must seek to eradicate it. If he has faults and habits which cause her to despise him, then her task is easier, because she has only to reason with herself and tell herself that the opinion or actions of one she despises cannot possibly matter to her. They are beneath her notice, just as a tiresome child's actions are beneath one's notice. In that case she can humor him as she would an invalid or a lunatic. She will be keeping her real aim in view, that is, to live with him in peace, because her desire for the welfare of the children is stronger than her desire to get rid of him.

She will have to use her wits all the time and never let herself indulge in wounded vanity or express her individuality in the way she has discovered brings forward one of his "difficult" moods.

(The incredible bores men can be in their homes when they are "difficult" many thousands of poor women know.)

Of course having to be always watchful is very trying. If it should be not the children but worldly position, or ambition, or money, or any other reason whatsoever which she finds stronger than her personal distaste for the "difficult" man, she will have to act in the same way, and use her wits to make it possible to live with him. For it is perfectly idiotic to stay on with him fumbling or acting in such a way as will shatter the nervous force of herself, and probably make the man more tiresome. That sort of thing is the old story of knocking one's head against a stone wall instead of quietly going through a gate.

Now for number two: Suppose Margaret wants to make things smooth and live with George in peace.

Well, more than ever must she study his character and notice the small things about it as carefully as the big.

If a skilled mechanic had a difficult bit of machinery to deal with, and his whole welfare depended upon his power to work it smoothly, what would he do if he saw that it was becoming uneven and cranky? He would examine its every part and discover what was the cause. He would not stop until he absolutely knew the cause of its annoying action.

If he discovered that it was because his own hand was shaky, he would try to steady his hand. If he found that there was apparently no present cause for the machine's getting out of order, he would then know that there was some fault in the construction which he was powerless to alter and that he must ignore it and for the time turn out second-class work or wait until it went right again. But he would never be so stupid as to grind on in temper because he felt that machines had no right to get out of order and ought to work as he wished them to,

regardless of the fact that this particular machine had idiosyncrasies. He would know that if he did that he would just smash the thing up, and that some parts might then fly out and hit himself.

Margaret should use exactly the same method with George. Her difficulty would be to own to herself that *anything* in the uncomfortable situation could be her own fault.

If, however, she finds on examination that it is really not her fault, and that the "difficult" moments come, so to speak, like a bolt from the blue, then she must just soothe or remain silent; unless the man is of a reasonable nature, when she can explain to him how these ways of his pain her, and how, when he is unreasonable and "difficult" over so many trifles—be they jealousy or economy or any other thing—he is just causing her to lose respect for him and will eventually wear out her love. Then if the man has any decent qualities in him, he himself will try to change.

But sometimes a man is "difficult" because he is working terribly hard and his nerves are on edge. Then it is that a woman should show tact and tenderness as she would to a child.

And now we get to question three.

And we find that Margaret admits that just to please herself each day and express her feelings and desires is her real aim.

Then the only thing to be done with a "difficult" husband is to fight it out and see whose will is the stronger.

Some natures enjoy fighting, and if Margaret wins she may have peace at last in her home. But if George gets the best of it, then she has to begin all over again and may in the end come to think that there is something quite sensible in that old verse about the "dinner of herbs where love is" being better than the "stalled ox and hatred therewith." Who knows?

Is There a Danger Year in Marriage?

Answered by Elinor Glyn

NEXT MONTH



Margaret's real desire is to leave George but her interest in the children makes her waive it.

By ARTHUR TRAIN

His Children's

Illustrations by



Part Seven:

CHAPTER XXVI

IT WAS five o'clock and all the children had gone home. The ground was strewn with pasteboard boxes, torn newspapers, crushed cups, wrappings of every sort—the débris of the party. Where the air had been alive with the tumult of voices, the wheezing of the accordion, the whine of the bagpipes and the raucous cries of Mr. Punch now brooded a startling silence. Yet something of that intense, vibrant life seemed yet to hover there, charging the air with unseen pulsations.

The Pirate, sitting alone on a green bench, could still feel in his ears the vibrations, hear the pounding of hundreds of little feet. He had been glad to sit down at last, although he did not feel exactly tired. Rather he did not seem to have much feeling at all. Uncle Billy, mousing with his pipe around the remains of the marionette theater, thought the old man had gone to sleep—

58

but Uncle Billy was mistaken. Old Peter was not asleep, although he was dreaming.

He sat erect and high—the Kaynes were all long barreled—his thin old legs crossed, his lean brown hands with their blue-black veins laid one athwart the other upon his knee.

Old Peter was just a shade bewildered. There had been so many children. So many! And they had darted about so quickly! They had tired his eyes. But not him—only his eyes. He half closed them. The air was sweet, surprisingly so, and the fragrance that stole along the grass was redolent of blossoms. He took several long breaths, in spite of a slight tightness in his chest. Oh, it was good! Good!

His eyelids sank lower. He wondered he did not feel more exhausted after such a long day. But it had been worth it. Yes, life was sweet at any age. It might be different if you were left alone, but he had so much. So much to enjoy! So much to be proud of! There never had been a better son, a finer man than Rufus. His boy. He had known the boy would make good, and he had.

He would never have built the house if he had not known that Rufus would make good. The house! He remembered

his first talk with Howlett about it. He had never really liked Howlett. He was too autocratic, too much of a swelled head, stuck on himself. "I want you to build me the best house you know how—latest type—solid—best material—something to last!" he had told the architect. Well, he had got it. There was nothing finer in New York—and it would last, too! Long, long after he was gone—it would still be there. No one could want anything better. His house! His family!

He closed his eyes for a moment the better to savor it all. The shadows from the Mall crept closer and closer—drawing a coverlet of partial obscurity over the refuse of the picnic. The children seemed to have come back. He could hear them babbling all about him—babbling, babbling. He opened his eyes a little wider. The evening breeze stirred the papers on the grass and sent them flying. Yes, there the children were—everywhere, all in white—all over the grass. He was glad they had come back. He had been lonely without them. Their voices were getting louder all the time—rising higher and higher,

*A Novel that Reveals the Skeletons
in the Closets of Fifth Avenue*

Children

Charles D. Mitchell

drowning out everything like the roar of waves. Throughout it all he seemed to hear the skirl of bagpipes—above his head somewhere. The wind swayed his whiskers gently. His eyes closed.

It was distinctly cooler. He could no longer hear the voices of the children and he perceived to his surprise that they had gone away again. Those white things were only pieces of paper! But there was no doubt that they had been there a moment ago. He had seen them distinctly. Children were all like that—here one second and gone the next. Sheila was just like that. His little Sheila—his “fairy moonbeam.” What a shame she could not have been there to see the children! Where was she? Where had she gone? Why had she not told him that she expected to be away? It was not like her. She was always so thoughtful—so sweet.

He began to worry. Suddenly he became convinced that she was in danger. The children had come back again and the sound of their voices was like the shouting of the sea. They were pushing close about him, stretching out their hands, fear on their faces; and they were all in danger, terrible danger; and as he stared at them he saw that each one was Sheila—a thousand Sheilas—and each one dearer to him than anything else on earth. The roar of the sea poured all about him. Then the sun set—suddenly—and darkness.

“Gently! Hold him like that!” he heard someone saying, and he opened one eye. It was still bright daylight. The sun had come back. There was a group of people about him and he recognized Rufus and Uncle Billy. What were they worrying about? He tried to smile but he could not move his face. It seemed stiff—cramped. He tried to get up but his left arm and leg refused to budge. There was something the matter with his tongue. It made him angry.

He wanted to tell them about Sheila. What were they waiting for? Why were all those motors stopping just there, with their staring occupants? From the distant avenue came a faint clang-ing which grew louder and then louder. Then someone hit the gong a vicious penultimate stroke right beside him. He was furious at his own futility. And then—crowning insult!—he felt the bench with himself upon it being lifted in air and carried towards the motors.

He remembered little of his trip home, or of how he got up the front steps of the house and into his bed. But his sense of relief at being once more surrounded by his own personal effects was great. It was such a comfort to feel that he was back home—in his own house—with his family. Everybody was there: Rufus, Elizabeth, Billy, Diana, Claudia, even that fool James;



Sheila

everybody except Sheila. He endeavored to communicate to them the important fact that she was in danger, but his mouth gave forth only a succession of meaningless sounds. Disgusted, he gave up trying. Then a long time passed during which—so far as he was aware—nothing happened at all.

CHAPTER XXVII

IT IS probable that both Elizabeth and Diana would have been more dismayed by Rufus's disclosure of his misfortune had their minds not been distracted by Sheila's mysterious departure, of which they had first learned when Diana, returning home the previous afternoon, had found a penciled note in her sister's handwriting saying that she was going down to spend a few days at Doctor Dhal's Butterfly Club.

This discovery, coming so shortly after Diana's talk with Sheila and the latter's expressed willingness to abandon Dhal and all his works, was to that extent the more appalling. That, as Sheila had

His Children's Children

said in her note, Lulie Wingate, Rita Ricardo, Oscar Florian and others equally conspicuous were also down there did not assuage Diana's anxiety. Florian and his associates were almost as antipathetic to her as Dhal himself. Rita Ricardo kept snakes, and indeed there was to Diana something reptilian about all of them. This made her the more ready to believe all the implications in what Maitland had repeated to her about Dhal.

She had communicated his information at once to Sheila, who had at first ridiculed it. The child had never, she assured Diana, felt half so well as since she had been taking the exercises at the sanitarium. They were perfectly simple—deep breathing, fresh air, a mild diet. Doctor Dhal himself was never there and the instruction was given entirely by young women. If it benefited her, what difference did it make whether it was called "yoga" or anything else?

When Diana endeavored to explain, Sheila became indignant. She did not know what Diana was talking about. What she said was all nonsense! Why didn't she go around there and find out for herself instead of listening to a lot of silly gossip which was utterly false? Diana could not understand the intense feeling of resentment which she seemed to have aroused in Sheila. Finally the girl promised to give it all up.

That had been six weeks before, and Diana had been lulled into a specious sense of security by Sheila's apparent willingness to yield to her sister's wishes. And all the time Sheila had been getting into it deeper and deeper. That Diana did not know what "it" was made her fear the greater. There was something ominous in the fact that Sheila had lied—must deliberately have broken her promise and had intended to do so all along. Some subtle influence must have undermined the girl's normal standards of conduct.

At least Sheila had had the decency to let them know where she was. Could the child have gone back to drugs again? But a search of Sheila's bureau and medicine closet revealed nothing to suggest a resumption of the habit, if it could be called such. And her appearance for the last three months belied any such suggestion. Lying in a corner, where evidently Sheila had dropped and overlooked it, Diana found a curious cone-shaped object. It was round at the base and about five inches in diameter, made of brass wire twisted into a spiral and terminating in a crudely fashioned serpent's head. She recalled with a shudder having seen a similar object worn by a dancing girl. Something far more dangerous and terrible than drugs was hanging over Sheila, gradually overpowering her senses—physical and moral—as with an insidious, poisonous perfume.

Diana had telephoned Lloyd at once, but had found him neither at his office nor his rooms. He had been, in fact, even then on his way to the Kayne house with Rufus's will, which he was eventually to take away with him undelivered after seeing the tableau of Devereaux and Diana in the window. That tell-tale silhouette, following on the very heels of his talk with Rufus that afternoon, had confirmed his worst suspicions. There was no mistaking the abandon with which Diana had thrown herself into her lover's arms—no longer room for doubt that he was her lover.

And yet for some perverse reason Lloyd knew that he loved her none the less himself—loved and hated her at the same time—refusing to face that which his reason told him must be the truth. Was instinct, the deeper spiritual knowledge of his subconscious self, teaching him to question reason? Or was the great wave of his passion lifting him off his feet and carrying him bodily towards the rocks? A change had come over him. So far as this woman was concerned he would now have thrown conscience to the winds—while surrendering no other jot of his integrity. This emotion that now possessed him, this lust of Satan or thirst of the soul, whichever it may have been, had overcome his conscious will, and yet his surrender to it had bred a certain ruthlessness towards its object. He would bide his time. Perhaps she would tire of Devereaux. Then—

But he was in no conciliatory mood when next morning Diana called him on the telephone, told him the news regarding Sheila and asked for his advice. What did she take him for, he asked himself? Did she imagine that she could deceive him about her relations with Devereaux and, while keeping him in suspense, use him to the limit? Rather gruffly he told her that she had better go to Jamaica near which the Butterfly Club was situated and see if she couldn't persuade the child to go home with her. If she was unsuccessful he'd see what could be done next.

Why, he demanded peremptorily, hadn't she kept track of what Sheila was doing? At least enough to know whether or not she had been faithful to her promise? Diana could make no defense. There was none to make. She had learned only a part

of the lesson of responsibility. Having once rescued Sheila she had left her to her own devices—with this result.

"Don't be cross with me!" Diana had begged.

"Why not?" he had answered brusquely. "I've a right to be! I'm furious with you!"

Yet it had been with a deep sense of comfort that she had heard his voice through the telephone.

It was too late to do anything that evening and it was accordingly not until the next morning—the morning of May Day—that Diana, shortly before Rufus had left the house for the purpose of finding his father in Central Park, had started for Long Island. She drove herself, taking no chauffeur, and the exhilaration induced by the glory of the spring and her swift flight through the soft green countryside gradually allayed her fears. No wonder Sheila had wished to be in the country at such a moment.

Diana had looked up her route in the road book before starting and, at a wooded corner by a duck pond, left the turnpike for a sandy road leading towards the Sound. For a mile or so she drove past open fields and at length came unexpectedly upon a high brick wall surmounted by iron palings. Midway was a heavy door painted green with a small barred opening or peephole closed from within by a slide. On one side was an ordinary push button marked "ring." There was no name or mark on the door save a swastika on the lintel above. This was enough of a cue and Diana, having parked her car on the other side of the road, pressed the bell, which after some delay was answered by a negro servant.

Through the door Diana could see an extensive lawn where a number of persons were playing tennis, basketball, battledore and shuttlecock, ring toss and throwing a medicine ball. The negro on learning her errand conducted her up the path towards a large yellow house with several additions and many windows. In a grove of trees farther up the hill behind the house were a number of bright colored bungalows. Several females were walking about the piazzas in pink, blue and purple kimonos. From inside came the insistent whine of a phonograph. Diana now observed that the athletes all had on tights over which they threw the wrappers when they were done playing. A pleasant faced young woman dressed in a sort of bathing suit de luxe came forward, shook hands with the visitor and led her into a small bare reception room.

"I will try to find Miss Kayne for you," she said civilly. "She may be at one of the lectures. If not, she may have gone out walking."

A few moments later Sheila herself came in dressed in the street costume which she had worn when she had left home.

"What have you followed me down here for?" she asked, coldly suffering Diana's kiss.

"To take you home."

"I'm not going home!" Sheila answered, moving a step towards the door by which she had entered.

Diana became angry.

"You promised to give up all this," she protested sharply.

Sheila's face remained expressionless. She did not reply.

"Mother is frightfully upset about your going away without saying anything to her. It was very inconsiderate of you—heartless, in fact. Please get your things and come at once. I have the motor outside."

Sheila shook her head. There was a look in her eyes that frightened Diana.

"I insist!"

Sheila tittered. The sound was harsh, uncanny. It drove everything from Diana's mind that she had purposed using as an argument with her sister.

"You've lied to me!" she cried furiously. "What has come over you? Have you gone back to taking drugs?"

Sheila's face, hitherto merely scornful and antagonistic, hardened. Turning her back upon her sister, she walked haughtily through the doorway.

"Sheila!" cried Diana, hurrying after her. "Sheila—dear! Oh, Sheila! Please come back!" But the child had vanished.

Diana, turning into the adjacent corridor, came face to face with Oscar Florian, arrayed in white trousers and sleeveless purple jersey. He exhaled an odor of *quelques fleurs*. There was something about the chubbiness of his chin with its little pointed beard and the whiteness of his arms that seemed positively indecent.

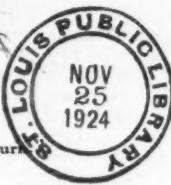
"Ah!" he cried gaily, holding out a soft white hand with shiny nails. "Excuse my dishabille! Are we to have the pleasure of welcoming you to our circle? I understand your sister is here."

"How do you do," said Diana rigidly. "Can you tell me if Doctor Dhal is in? I am anxious to see him."



CHARLES DANTON

The young woman beamed on Diana: "Doctor Dhal wishes me to say your sister is unwilling to return."



Florian smiled as if something amused him and withdrew his hand.

"I will see," he answered with his old insolence.

Diana returned to the waiting room and stood looking out of the window. What was behind all this? A terrible dread lest Sheila should be already lost possessed her. Her tension

increased as the minutes passed. Unexpectedly a thick, oily voice close behind her said:

"Dear lady, what can I do for you?"

She had heard no one enter and she shrank back; then, overcoming her sensation of horror and disgust, faced about. Doctor Dhal was standing there in a gown of blue crash, a red sash about

his waist, a bland smile upon his pasty face.

"Please tell my sister to come home with me!" she besought him.

"Does she not desire to remain?" he asked in apparent surprise.

"Her father and mother don't want her to stay. They did not know that she was coming. They wish her to return at once."

Dhal bowed. "Dear lady, I will speak to her. She will, of course, go if she wishes. No one ever stays here unwillingly. All are free as the air."

He spoke with such sincerity that Diana's feeling of repugnance was somewhat weakened. Superficially at least the man was a gentleman.

"Will you sit down?" he asked. He placed a chair for her and she sank into it. Coincidentally Doctor Dhal slid into another. He was looking deep into her eyes now—his glance never leaving them for an instant. She had been foolish to be afraid of this man!

"Are you sure your father and mother are correctly informed about what we teach here?" he asked in a kindly tone. "We are seeking only perfect health—'*mens sana in corpore sano*'—self-realization, perfect and harmonious development of body, mind and soul. Our doctrines take a very firm hold upon those who study them. Much harm can be done by interruption. Sheila—"

The familiar use of her sister's Christian name by the stranger released Diana's will from any momentary ascendancy which his personality might have achieved over it. To hear those mucilaginous lips uttering the word "Sheila" revived all her original loathing.

"I wish to take my sister away with me—now!" she answered definitely.

The sweetness of Doctor Dhal's smile faded but his urbanity did not.

"Very well!" he answered. "Doubtless you have sufficient reasons. But it is a pity not to let her stay. She is very ductile. She is making great progress—and it is possible that she may not wish to go."

Doctor Dhal appeared to dissolve in a bluish mist and to be sucked through the doorway as by a draft. Diana felt, after her two interviews, nervous, verging on tears. The Swami did not come back, but at the end of a quarter of an hour the young lady in the bathing suit beamed in once more.

"Doctor Dhal wishes me to tell you that he has spoken to your sister and that she is unwilling to return to the city. Of course he has no way to make her do so."

Millions of motes floating in the sunlight seemed to obscure Diana's vision. She rose, feeling faint. From the other side of



the corridor came the rasping of somebody's famous ragtime orchestra accompanying a hoarse vibrant voice upon the phonograph—"All I want is a little bit of love! A little bit of love from you!"

Maitland, having waited vainly at the trust company until eleven o'clock for Rufus to appear, called up the district attorney, with whom as a junior partner in Crutchfield and Pepperill's he had no difficulty in securing an immediate appointment, and took the subway to the Criminal Court building.

"I want to find out two things," said he succinctly as they settled down to business. "First, what you really know about a man who calls himself Doctor Dhal; second, how, if at all, one can force him to surrender a young girl if she falls under his influence and voluntarily goes to one of the various places he runs and refuses to leave it."

The district attorney—Morgan, also a young man—looked



"Get out of the way!" ordered Maitland sharply. "Sheila! Little one!" purred the Yogi, looking into her eyes.

significantly at Maitland over his horn-rimmed spectacles.
"So you're on Dhal's trail?"

"I'm afraid so—yes."

The official shook his head ruefully.

"Then you've struck one of the most amazing phenomena in this city. I don't know of anything else like it anywhere. The man's got a kind of lingo—a patter—that enables him to pass for a 'Swami.' He's no more a Swami than you are. Knows some of their tricks though, but he only uses 'em to create an impression when necessary. Of course his athletic stuff is O. K. and that is how he hooks the rich women who are his real game."

Dhal has sense enough to keep out of the way during the preliminary stages. Everything is antiseptic and hygienic and all to the good and they all go crazy over it. His employees keep up an air of mystery about the 'Omnipotent,' and drop hints of his wonderful occult powers, and by the time an old girl has finished the course and can touch her toes with her finger tips without squatting she's generally feeling so full of beans that she wants

to go on and become a regular member.

"You see how it works? They'd forgotten all about how it felt to take a good chestful of ozone, or have a beefsteak appetite, or want to do any of the things they used to—and suddenly the mysterious Doctor Dhal makes them young again, with all of youth's desires and impulses. That's at the bottom of it."

Morgan pressed a button and an officer entered.

"Tell Grady to give you those old indictments we found against Dhal."

He turned to Maitland again.

"And there's where the harm begins. They're told that no matter how fine they feel they will go on feeling better and better if they can only persuade Doctor Dhal to receive them as his 'chelas.' Accordingly they make application, he looks them over carefully, selects the likeliest to play into his hands, and makes them go through what he calls a 'period of purification.' They are then permitted to join his club and after they have been thoroughly tested out by Dhal himself, the ones he wants are gradually initiated into the esoteric rites and mysteries of what he says is a recognized religion.

"Once they reach that stage it's generally all over. They regard Dhal as a perfect being who can do no wrong. He teaches them that there is no such thing as morals or law. That the highest religion is the religion of 'self-expression.' The secret of it is, of course, that he gives them an excuse for doing what they want to do. Clever, rather! When you come right down to brass tacks his religion, as he calls it,

is simply any sort of license, camouflaged under a mass of undigested references to supposed doctrines of Hindoo philosophy which I'm told are absolutely meaningless. It's the greatest con game ever pulled off. The man really is an artist. If I should tell you the women that he's had down there, and who still swear by him and put up for him when he gets into trouble—for he occasionally does get into trouble—you'd think I was stringing you!"

"Look here," he ejaculated as the officer returned with a bundle of papers. "This is the kind of stuff he gives them to read and study!" and he handed Maitland a paper bound book ostensibly containing the "theory and practice" of Doctor Dhal's religion, but which on its face was nothing more than a hodge-podge of pornographic matter, with illustrations so crude as to be ridiculous. "And yet they fall for it!"

"I'd like to send the bird up! But it's practically no use trying. He's so foul that nobody can get near him without being so contaminated, or at least open to the suspicion of being so contaminated, that his victims are afraid to appear against him.

There is no doubt but that one way or another he has wrecked the lives of a large number of women. At the present moment there are no less than five complaints in this office and that of the district attorney of Suffolk County against him—but nobody is willing to testify. Now that you've heard the story, what can I do for you?"

Maitland rubbed his chin meditatively.

"Suppose a girl of nineteen goes down to his place, is there any way of forcing him to surrender her?"

"You're a lawyer, Colonel Maitland," returned the other. "You know as well as I do that in default of showing duress there is practically nothing that a parent can do to control a child of that age. He or she is a free agent. If, however, there is any evidence of crime, wrongdoing, or a conspiracy to impair morals or, as I said, duress—that's a different matter. I could issue my search warrant here and Jones could give you one in Long Island City. But what would happen? You'd not find a particle of evidence of any sort and not a single one of Dhal's patients would open their mouths."

"Well, what is a father to do?" asked Maitland.

"I don't know," answered Morgan. "But I'll tell you what is likely to happen any fine day. Some father or brother or sweetheart is going to put a bullet through Doctor Dhal's satin waistcoat, and then we'll have another Thaw trial!"

CHAPTER XXVIII

ON THE elaborate dais of an ornate court room, five middle-aged gentlemen in black bombazine gowns sprawled in postures indicating respectively indifference, irritation, resentment, scorn and coma. The one who would later write their joint opinion was listening; one—the last—was sleeping; one was wondering where he could find an apartment for his mother who insisted on moving to New York; and two were dreaming of the Garden City golf course.

Maitland had been sitting in that luxurious legal conservatory since one o'clock waiting for his case to be reached, for it had been too late to secure an adjournment from the opposing counsel when Diana had telephoned. Through the drone of the arguments he had heard only her voice as it had come over the wire. "I need you! I need you!" She was waiting for him now in one of the rear rows of spectators, her car outside. There had been only a moment's opportunity to shake hands and assure her that at the earliest possible instant he would be with her.

"Crutchfield and Pepperill?—Mr. Maitland?"

He heard the name and mechanically arose and made his way forward. As if his astral body were concealed somewhere behind a cornice he could see himself bowing and hear his voice in the monotonous, slightly bored tone that it was the fashion to affect. At the end of his declamation five swivel chairs squeaked in a common relief; a distinguished looking man, much more like a judge than any of the others, but who was only a clerk, arose and murmured: "Hear ye! Hear ye! This court stands adjourned until tomorrow at one o'clock!" The assembled lawyers got up with an assumption of leisure and drifted slowly out conversing in low tones.

Another moment and Diana and Lloyd were in the car, entangled in the traffic of Fourth Avenue. The face of the girl beside him was set, her eyes tortured; but she nevertheless drove with control.

The great arms of the Queensboro Bridge spanned the twisting, uncoiling river with festoons of palely glowing lights. Ahead over the smoke of Long Island a snow-capped Oberland reared itself rose-pink in the afterglow. It faded to mauve, to gray, then disappeared. An interminable procession of red lights fled before them.

Neither spoke. She was longing to pour out her heart to him, to abase herself to him, to paint her dread of the invisible menace that threatened her sister.

He was suspicious, antagonistic, resentful. He would serve her—yes. That was his job. But let there be no more acting. Let them look into each other's eyes and acknowledge the truth.

Once over the bridge she began to talk in detached jerky sentences. Crouched at the wheel, her eyes fixed on the road, she recounted her experiences of the morning, sparing herself with regard to neither her neglect of Sheila in the past nor the stupidity of her last approach. Her unrestrained self-recrimination had almost the savor of a confession. All her confidence had fallen from her. He had never seen her like that. It was clear that she wanted him to know her exactly as she was. She had turned instinctively to him, her attitude saying unmistakably, "I don't know what I should do without you!"

Her helplessness, her dependence upon himself and the fact that she had appealed so confidently to him could not but touch Lloyd. That she had called upon him in this way instead of upon Devereaux puzzled yet gratified him. He ceased to resent being made use of. Instead, he found himself oblivious of the purpose of their errand or the danger hanging over Sheila, of everything save that he was by her side. He exulted in the consciousness of her reliance upon him. Up to this time she had always seemed to him to be stronger than himself. It was an exquisite delight to feel that she needed him—no one else, only him!

Holding his hat rim with one hand, his upturned collar clutched in the other, he watched her driving into the night—a Walküre, a witch on her broomstick. Now and again his arm would touch hers and once he was thrown sharply against her and felt the warmth of her body. A strange, wild irresponsibility—utterly foreign to the calm, cool Maitland—took possession of him. She was his! What did it matter what she was or had been or had done if he loved her? What did anything matter if she could be made to love him?

They swung off the main road and shortly came upon the brick wall.

"Here we are," she said abruptly. "It's up to you from now on!"

"Then let's turn the motor," he answered, coming back to earth again. "We may want to leave in a hurry."

She ran the car a few yards beyond the end of the wall, backed it and left it headed in the direction whence they had come.

"What are you going to do?" she asked as if, whatever his reply might be, she would be entirely satisfied.

"I don't know," he confessed. "But I'm going to do something."

The negro eyed them suspiciously through the wicket before opening the door but admitted them and left them in the reception room, explaining that everybody was at dinner.

They were kept waiting what seemed an interminable time. Maitland became first impatient, then irritated. He looked for a bell, but there was none. At length from a distance came the sound of chairs being moved; then of many footsteps. Dinner evidently was over. At the end of the corridor an irregular procession of figures began to pass. Maitland, who had no plan of campaign, found himself at a loss. Suppose they were simply left kicking their heels just where they were all the evening?

He walked part way down the corridor to see what was going on. A large hall hung with brilliantly colored stuffs opened to the right. At one end was a platform faced by rows of chairs. Twenty or thirty people were already occupying them. Clearly some sort of evening entertainment was towards. The incongruity of his presence—like that of a gentleman burglar—slightly amused him. Florian, in a scarlet dinner jacket—obviously an effort at self-expression—passed along talking to a young girl. It was Sheila! Then Maitland became conscious of reality. The sight of the pursy artist with his chubby chin and little pointed beard infuriated him. He saw Florian lay his hand upon Sheila's shoulder and could see her as if by instinct draw away from him.

Maitland stepped boldly into the room.

"Miss Kayne!" he called.

Engrossed in what Florian was saying, she did not at first hear him. But he was conscious that others in the room were gazing at him with surprise.

"Miss Kayne!" he repeated, approaching her.

Sheila turned, and every vestige of color left her face.

"I have come to take you home," he said simply, without noticing Florian.

Sheila put her hand to her breast.

"Who—sent—you?" she asked.

"Nobody—I came," he replied. "I want you to come with me."

Florian had not moved from where he had been standing. Sheila looked first at him, then at Maitland.

"I can't, Mr. Maitland!" she said. "Really, I can't!"

"Why of course you can!" he insisted. "Do you mean you are afraid to leave?"

A troubled look crossed her face, into which the color was now slowly returning.

"Perhaps Miss Kayne means that it would not be courteous to Doctor Dhal to go away as you suggest," said Florian, looking at her fixedly.

"Miss Kayne will speak for herself!" retorted Maitland. He appealed to her once more. "May I have a few words with you alone—Sheila?"

At his use of her Christian name she (*Continued on page 132*)



MARION DAVIES, in her rôle as the high-hearted Princess Mary Tudor, moves like the spirit of Romance through Cosmopolitan Productions' film of brave deeds and fair damsels, "When Knighthood Was in Flower."



IN A CLAIRE, as she might look in the act of telling the Awful Truth in Mr. Richman's comedy, "The Awful Truth."



H ELEN LEE WORTHING of the Ziegfeld "Follies," slender and blonde,
has the kind of beauty that, once seen, haunts the memory.

PHOTOGRAPH BY NICHOLAS MURRAY



DORIS RANKIN, who plays opposite Lionel Barrymore in *private life*, as she appears in Haupmann's masterpiece, "Rose Bernd."

By HOLWORTHY

HALL

*A Love Story as Tonic
as a Sea Breeze*

Beach Roses

*Illustrations by
Grant T. Reynard*



NOW according to the proverb, everything has an end, and a cake has two—and so has the beach at Seaward, where the difference of a mile is the difference between the Seaward Inn at twenty-four dollars a day, and one of several boarding houses at seventeen dollars a week. The sea and the sky, however, haven't yet become exclusive, so that at both extremities of the beach romance comes in each June as naturally as driftwood—and much of it floats lightly out again each following September. But this was June, and the young man who was sitting in front of Herzfeld's Chowder Pavilion, at the seventeen dollar end, wasn't thinking of the calendar.

He was tall and spare and loose muscled; black-haired, black-eyed and sunburned; but for all the depth of his eyes and the squareness of his chin, there was something essentially boyish about him, some hint that his imagination still had plenty of elbow room. At a glance it was evident to many women that he was of the stuff of cavaliers; and in the past half-hour many women had glanced at him admiringly; but he had saved his attention for those few who paused at the little flower stand directly opposite and presently moved on again, without purchasing.

And now at length he got to his feet and walked over to the stand and gravely surveyed the proprietor, who was an old woman with ocean-blue eyes and a thousand wrinkles in every smile.

"I want to play a sort of a joke," said the young man, in a voice which was unexpectedly soft and caressing. "I want to play a sort of a joke, and you're going to be in on it. If it's like I size it up, a lot of these girls that go by here want some of your flowers and can't afford to pay for 'em. Am I right?"

She inspected him with a lessening smile and growing suspicion. "Well, what of it?"

The young man had produced a bill book. "What are your roses?"

"Two-fifty a dozen."

"You take two dozen of 'em," he ordered, "and wrap some of that red ribbon around the stems, and the next time a girl—only, mind you, she's got to look mighty poor and she's got to look mighty nice; you know what I mean—asks you what roses cost and then starts to walk off, you call her back and say a man you never saw before paid for 'em and left 'em here for whoever wanted 'em and went away. They're hers. Don't even tell her what I look like. Understand the idea?"

The old woman bobbed her head, and as she reached for the ribbon her eyes began to twinkle. "Sure," she said. "Leave it to me. It's a grand joke. One of them girls that's saved up all winter to come down here two weeks. It'll make her believe in fairies all over again. I thought first you was a masher."

The young man laughed. "How do you know I'm not?"

"Because if you was," she said cannily, "you'd have stuck around till after."

He laughed again; watched her set aside the fragrant armful, with its broad sash of red; nodded, and sauntered north. Two minutes later he had forgotten all about it.

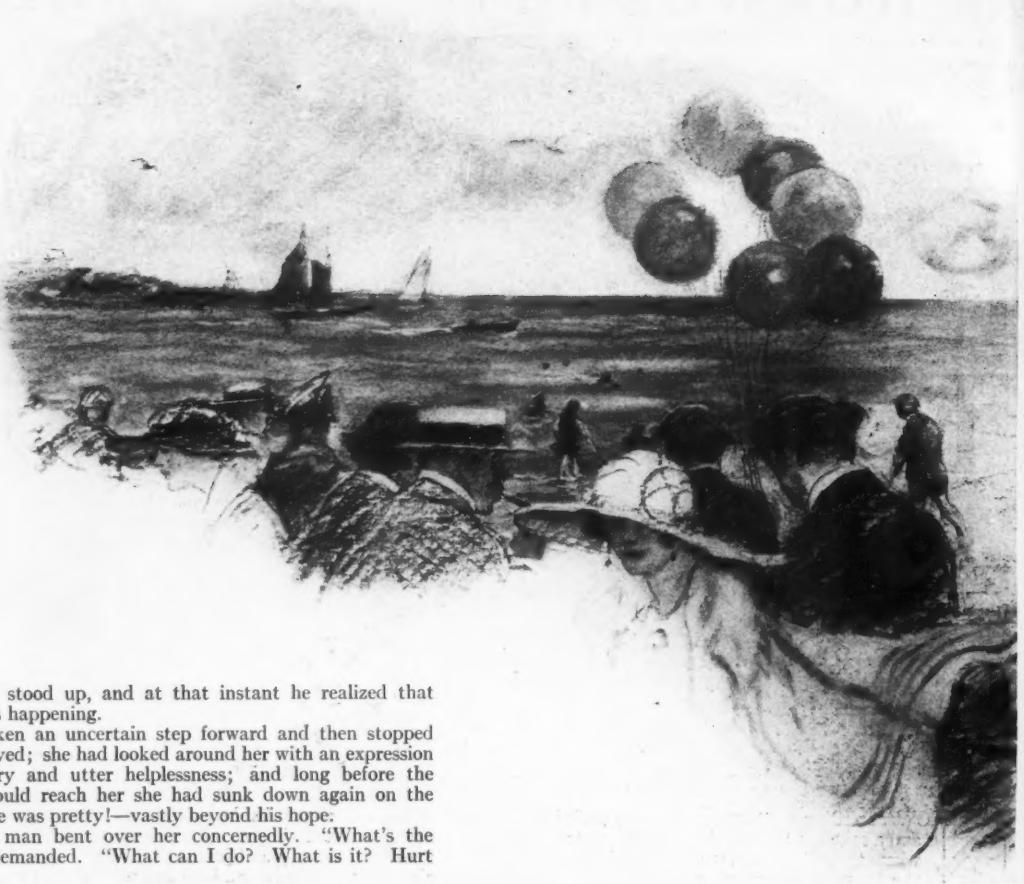
It was still mid-morning and the tide was out; consequently Seaward was promenading. In another ten minutes he had met the head of the slow moving stream which had its source at the Inn—men who apparently had just stepped, spotless, from the tailor's; women with exquisite summer frocks and dainty parasols; women so perfect and so poised that he could hardly fancy them to be real; girls who were bewilderingly sweet in delicate colors, and yet, to this young man's notion, equally unreal and unsubstantial. His eyes, as he beheld them, were as wide as a child's; and yet his heart gave no responsive flutter.

"It sure is an entertainin' parade," he said to himself, half grudgingly, "but it's sort of more human down at the other end." And presently, with no definite purpose, he turned back and sauntered south towards the boarding houses.

When he had gone perhaps a quarter of a mile he suddenly perceived, below him on the beach, a girl who was sitting quite alone looking out to the sea; and in her lap there was a sheaf of gorgeous red roses tied with a broad red ribbon.

His little whimsical act had gone out of his mind almost as soon as he had made the bargain; but now he halted and smiled reminiscently. The whole point had been to give a thrill of pleasure to someone he would never meet, and for himself to remain in the background, unknown; but now that he actually saw the beneficiary, he was normally curious to know what manner of girl this was who had received his flowers—and what she had thought. She was to have been poor, but he wondered if she were also pretty—not that it mattered, but still, he couldn't help wondering. And had she been overwhelmed or dubious or disturbed—or only amused—and grateful?

His curiosity pushed him towards her simply for the satisfaction of a closer view, but he had hardly left the boardwalk



when the girl stood up, and at that instant he realized that something was happening.

She had taken an uncertain step forward and then stopped short and swayed; she had looked around her with an expression of utter misery and utter helplessness; and long before the young man could reach her she had sunk down again on the sand. And she was pretty!—vastly beyond his hope.

The young man bent over her concernedly. "What's the matter?" he demanded. "What can I do? What is it? Hurt your foot?"

She shook her head, and he thought that she was crying; but a moment later she lifted her eyes and he saw that she was convulsed. "No!" she gasped. "*Asleep!* Only I didn't know it—and I—just couldn't stand up!"

The young man straightened in relief and began to grin. "That's different. I reckon we won't send for the ambulance, then. Can I help you up?"

She was slightly flushed but he liked her better because she wasn't too self-conscious. "Would you mind?"

"Oh, I guess I can live through it!" he said cheerfully, and gave her his hand; and when she was beside him he added, with tact which wasn't wholly lost on her: "Curious how that thing can put you right out of business, though. Sometimes it's funny and other times it isn't. I remember once in Mexico a flock of greasers jumped us one night and I grabbed my gun and started to get up—and my foot was asleep . . . Hold on while I pick up your flowers."

"Thank you ever so much . . . And then?"

"Oh, well!" he said. "There weren't only five of the greasers, and I had two boys from West Texas with me, so it worked out all right. But I might just as well have had a broken leg . . . Feel like tryin' to walk? That'll fix you up."

For a few slow paces she held gingerly to his arm. He was appraising her minutely, and approving of her; the old woman with the wrinkled smile had used most excellent judgment.

"Mighty nice roses you've got there," he said casually.

Her reply was slightly delayed. "Aren't they wonderful? I love them more than any I ever had."

"So? How's that?"

She hesitated and finally said: "Perhaps because they came as such a surprise . . . But you said something about Mexico. Have you been there much?"

"Off and on—yes. Why?"

"I was just wondering if you'd ever met Dan Carroll down there."

The young man laughed. "Lucky Dan? Why—I reckon I know him about as well as most anybody does. You must have been readin' a newspaper."

"Well, how much of it is really true?"

The young man was quizzical: "Why, that kind of depends on how much you've read—don't it?"

Here she released him and stood by herself. "But there's been so much in the papers—pages and pages and pages—about what a picturesque man he was, and how he trailed Villa into the hills and led oil rushes and had knife fights and all that, and then made millions and millions of dollars overnight in Oklahoma, and turned into a philanthropist and adopted orphans and did all sorts of lovely quixotic things—and it just doesn't seem to hang together, somehow. I mean, if it's true he'd be the most wonderful man I ever heard of. The kind of man—well, like the Prince of Wales—the kind of man everybody could love without ever having seen him. *Is he like that?*"

"I am afraid," said the young man, "you flatter him. And I ought to know because, you see—my name's Carroll."

There was a brief silence, during which she gazed at him steadily. Then her lips parted. "You shouldn't startle me like that. And I happen to know that Dan Carroll is in Chicago. The papers said so. And besides—"

The young man chuckled. "And besides, I don't look picturesque enough? I'm sorry, but I left my gun home and I don't ever wear spurs with a straw hat. No, my name's Carroll, all right, but it's Percy D . . . I don't look it, do I? . . . Thanks . . . And yours?"

She regarded him keenly. "Did you ever hear of the Hudsons, in New York?"

"Who hasn't? I guess they own everything but the river, don't they?"

"Well, my name's—Hudson."

It was the young man's turn to regard her closely, and he did it. "You win, sister. You got me roped and tied . . . But about Dan, he's just human. That's all; he's just human. Just as human as me and you. That junk in the papers—oh, he *did* it all right, but it wasn't for anything but to please himself! I know because I know Dan."

"But it's true, then, is it?"

"Why—sure. Everything you said, anyway. It's sure as shootin'!"

She drew a long breath. "Then I'd give everything in the world to meet him," she said. "Because he's the last romantic figure since Buffalo Bill. And—I'm glad to have met *you*—and thank you."

"Wait a second. What is that—my cue to go somewhere else? Or are you goin' to be nice and let me talk to you?"

"Let you talk to me!"

"Talk and listen," said the young man. "You see, I got a tongue and an ear that's a good deal like a saddle pony. They got to have exercise."

She had known long since that he was ingenuous, but it was all she could do to control her voice. "Th-thank you for the compliment!"

The young man put his hand on her arm. "Hold

She had taken the roses from him and now she buried her face in them. "What would you expect me to talk about?"

"Well," said the young man meditatively, "we got three subjects already. Flowers and Dan Carroll and you." He squinted up at the sun. "Gettin' along towards noon, too. Want to do me a favor? Save my life. The last time I was so lonesome was when my horse went lame in the Bad Lands. Come have a snack with me—the Inn, or anywhere else you like. Will you? I mean it."

He was a man, but he was also a boy and very much on the surface, so that she deliberated. "I don't know why I should—"

"You got to go further. Do you know why you *shouldn't*?"

Eventually, because she too was young and imaginative, and because he was himself and it was June, she shook her head. "No, I don't. Only—anywhere but the Inn."

His face fell. "But I thought you'd like that best! Have you ever been there?"

"Yes, a long time ago. But—they're not my kind. And it isn't any fun unless you really—belong."

"Well, there's something in that, too. All right. We'll go over to the Strand . . . Can I carry your flowers?"

A moment later, when she spoke to him, he didn't answer; and when she looked to find the reason his face was granite. Mechanically, almost involuntarily, he had counted the roses. There were only twenty, and he had paid for twenty-four. And



"It's a grand joke," said the old woman. "It'll make some girl believe in fairies all over again."

on, there! Don't get so excited! I picked you out on purpose." "Oh—you did!" Her tone was elusive. "That's something new."

"Well, sir," said the young man, "I'll tell you a fact. I been here two days now, and I listened in to quite a few conversations up there by the Seaward Inn, and I got some queer ideas. Nobody ever said a man was a *man*—they said he belonged to some particular club or other, or else he was the son of this or that fellow or was a relative of somebody else—and that was his brand. Nobody ever said a woman was a nice *woman*—they said she lived on such and such a street, or her dad was in a certain firm, and that was *her* brand. Well, sir, I'm fed up on it, so when I saw you sittin' down here it struck me that a girl that would go off by herself to look at the scenery and smell roses instead of wearin' a rut in the boardwalk and talkin' about the old man's money, was worth-investigation . . . so I did. It's your deal."

he wasn't a man who, even while he was playing Santa Claus, could be defrauded of eighty cents without an explanation.

As she sat across from him at table, his admiration was so frank and so ingenuous that she couldn't even be embarrassed. She was dressed with extreme simplicity and without so much as a necklace of imitation pearls for ornament; but he liked her far better than if she had worn an imported frock and genuine orientals. He liked her high white forehead, on which a loop of brown hair was forever trespassing; he liked her eyes, which were

clear and direct; he liked her strong, sensitive mouth and her chin, which told of native character and determination. And because he liked her so much he was proportionately sorry for her; and proportionately resolved to see that this day would last in her memory.

"What do you do?" he asked abruptly.

She started. "Why—I'm assistant secretary of a girls' club in New York—working girls, you know."

"Oh. Stenographer?"

"No—records and files."

"You ought to be doin' something better than that," he said reproachfully. "You've got more intelligence than that."

Her lips curved. "What would you suggest, for example?"

"Well, suppose you begin by tellin' me all about this club."

"Why, it's for working girls, just as I said—and we've got a branch at Seaward. We've got a big house in the south end, and the girls can come down for Sundays and their vacations. That's why I'm here now."

"For the whole summer?"

"Why, probably . . . But I won't lunch at the Strand very often—not buy roses for myself." She reached out to touch one of them; they were now in an ornate cut glass vase on the table. It pained him to think that his careless charity could have meant so much to her.

"How do you stand the city, though? How does *anybody* stand it?"

"Why, I don't know what other people do, but I stand it because of Seaward."

"Seaward!"

"Don't you think it's beautiful here?"

His smile was pitying. "Beautiful? Sister, did you ever see an Arizona sunset over the Buttes? Did you ever see a sunrise in the Black Hills? Did you ever ride the Texas ranges? Why, you don't know what that word means!"

"After luncheon," she said, nettled, "I'll show you the most heavenly spot you ever saw—and it isn't a mile from here."

"I'll take a don't," said the young man warmly. "Places like that don't grow within two thousand miles of here—you poor kid."

She gave him a quick glance from under her lashes. "Why should you say *that*?"

His voice dropped to an undertone. "Because I mean it. Lord! All you people livin' like flies in big cities—workin' in a boiler factory like New York—when there's places like I know—and callin' Seaward *beautiful*!"

She looked up at him but her eyes were veiled. "If I told you how I loathe New York you wouldn't believe me. But I still think Seaward is beautiful."

He sat so long peering at vacancy that she had to laugh at him to bring him back. "Not so very polite, was it?" he said. "But I was thinkin'."

"What were you thinking about?"

"Why—you had used another word—'romantic'—about Dan Carroll. I was wonderin' if the same man would have seemed so romantic to you in these ice cream pants and a blue coat on the boardwalk."

"But a man like that would be the same anywhere! Just as you would be the same anywhere!"

"If you hate New York so much, why don't you get out of it?"

"What would I do?"

And they fell to arguing; and by argument they became so much at ease with each other that in an hour or two the young man had forgotten to be sorry and the girl had forgotten to be recessive. More than that, they had stopped looking at each other directly; for each of them was aware that danger lurked in the other's eyes. For she was pretty and he was fascinating, and their thoughts were striking sparks together—and it was June.

It was half-past three when the young man broke off in the middle of a sentence and altered his tone.

"You mustn't mind me, sister," he said apologetically. "I'm a kind of a crank anyhow, I reckon. I want everybody else to have the same run of luck I do . . . Show me this place you like so much."

It was a cliff which overhung the bathing beach; a cliff with myrads of pine and fir trees, through which the sunshine came sifting in golden flecks down to the deep green moss; and out beyond was the sea, blue as a bluebird's wing, stretching into infinity. The tide was in, and fashionable Seaward was bathing; the two had the cliff entirely to themselves; and for a minute they stood together and watched the horizon.

"It is what I would call—pretty," said the young man at length. "As pretty as the girls I saw this morning. Pretty, but

—not much else. I think I would find it more attractive in a storm."

She turned on him. "There's always one thing you can do about it, you know!"

"I intend to. I intend to go back West. Very soon. And I'm sorry I am no good at bluffin'. Maybe you would have liked it better if I had thrown a fit about it. But I can say one thing, anyhow—to a New Yorker it would be beautiful."

She sat down on a convenient log and smiled vaguely. "You're frightfully hard to please. Some of the greatest artists in America come here every summer."

"But don't forget," he said, "the reason they don't come out to the Grand Canyon is, they would waste their time—because no man yet has been able to put it on canvas. What I could show you—if you came out to *my* country!"

"Well, what could you show me?"

He didn't reply at once. "A New Yorker might not like it," he said, "but I could show you peace. I could show you color that would make you wonder if you were dreaming. I could show you the raw material that dreams are made *out of*—out of solitude and space and sunsets. It would do you good to come out and see what we are like . . . Is there any chance of it?"

"There's nothing I'd like better."

"Well—why not?"

When she looked up he was standing before her with a white smile on his lips and illimitable depths in his eyes. At the moment he might have been eighteen, and incredibly mature; or forty-five, and incredibly young.

"Exactly—what do you mean—by that?"

"The devil of it is," he said tardily, "that the English language is so poor . . . I know as well as you do that all men say the same thing, whether they only talk with their mouths or not. And I know that to most people the idea of fallin' in love in a hurry is a big joke. It's funny. But if you would care to see my country, I would be glad to take you there."

"You honestly think that—"

He raised his hand. "My dear, I would not fool you, now, for anything in this world. I learned the value of laws by livin' in Mexico—where there aren't any. I learned the value of money by bein' broke for most of my life. I learned about women by never meetin' any like you. And I can size up a horse or a woman in two minutes. You *got* to, out where I live—and you can't afford to make any mistakes, so you just naturally don't . . . The work I'm doing out there is a kind that would please you, and you could do it with me and help me and be happy. I know that because—even if you have not said so—I know you hate big cities, like I do . . . Will you come back with me?"

Her eyes were on the moss at her feet. "How can you ask a thing like that? What do you know about me?"

"Only what you have told me—and what you have shown me. But that's plenty enough."

"In—a few hours?"

"I am always ready to gamble on my judgment."

"Oh—you *admit* it's a gamble, then?"

"Like everything else. Like life. A man who won't admit it is a fool. Only this is everything—to—me."

"What makes you think so?"

"Your face."

She put both hands over her burning cheeks. "And until four hours ago—you never saw me!"

"That isn't the point. It's twenty-nine years I *didn't* see you—and I've been waitin'."

"And you expect me—to answer you—the way you want me to?"

"I never expect anythin' but the worst. That's why I'm never disappointed. I always get more than I expect—or deserve. When those greasers jumped us, like I told you, I expected to get shot—but I didn't get in front of the fire just the same, did I?"

"You're the only man I ever knew who—"

"Don't say that! All men have the same line of talk. It's all there is to say. You've got to tell the difference between gold and iron pyrites yourself. *You're* the assayer. I'm only the specimen."

"But why do you think you—want me?"

"If any man could answer that question to any woman—he ought to be elected President. How can I tell you? Tell me why a magnet is a magnet—and then I'll answer you." He came a step nearer. "Have I gone too far? Are you too Eastern to stand for my talk?"

She shook her head. "I respect any emotion—if it's sincere."

"Have I made any headway? Have I made it clear to you



"I learned about women," the
man told the girl with the roses,
"by never meetin' any like you."

that I want not only your companionship but also your help?"
She said nothing.

After a moment the young man dropped down beside her.
"It is a funny condition to be in, this life," he said thickly.
"Mighty few people look it in the face. They laugh when
somebody falls in love at first sight. Hell! *Everybody* falls in
love at first sight—only most people are so scared or so cagey or
so one thing or another they don't wake up to it right away like

I did. I don't give a hang whether it's five hours or five minutes
—I know I love you. Could I say any more than that if it was
five years?"

Her hand moved towards him. "You've—you don't even
know—what my ideals are—what my ambitions are—"
"They're the same as mine," he said. "Because I'd make 'em
so—if they aren't already. And I can give you everything
you've never had and always wanted." (Continued on page 140)

A Romance of the African Veldt



A Résumé of Parts One to Five:

LADY FLAVIA DESMOND had been adored by society for her youth, beauty and fascination. On the morning she married, her husband was shot dead in her presence by a friend, who forthwith killed himself. Refusing to disclose the reason for the double tragedy, she stubbornly fought for and obtained the right to her husband's fortune—and was straightway cut dead by her former friends.

She was about to commit suicide in Paris when a chance meeting with a stranger, Lundi Druro, South African miner, gave her a new grip on life.

Thereafter Flavia Desmond disguised herself as a man—young Desmond, artist and writer—and sought to lose her sorrow in wandering. Her objective was South Africa, to witness the happiness of Druro even though she could not share it.

She came to Wankelo, Rhodesia. But she was shocked at what she discovered. Druro, the buoyant, the debonair, had returned home to find the girl he loved married offhand to another man, and his gold mine worthless. The blow made him a self-contemptuous drunkard with misery lurking in his eyes.

To be near him, Desmond, secure in her cunning disguise, which not even Druro suspected, took work in a mine owned by Constant Lypiatt, the man Druro's fiancée, Gaynor, had married; and she lived the rough veldt life in all ways as a man. The fineness hid by Druro's drunken exterior she came to know well; also the treachery and craftiness beneath Lypiatt's suave manners. One plot of Lypiatt's to complete the ruin of Druro by compromising him with the rather "vampish" Loochia Luff, she neatly foiled. Meanwhile her own love for Druro deepened.

Arrived a day when Desmond came down with fever. Unconscious, she was carried to Mrs. Hope's hospital by Lypiatt; and of course Mrs. Hope at once discovered her secret. But when she recovered, despite the nurse's pleading, Desmond again donned a man's clothes.

She found now that Druro, in utter despair over the apparent complete failure of his own life, was about to end it all. To save him, Desmond as a last resort induced his old love, Gaynor Lypiatt, to come to his hut at night and plead with him. But Gaynor's courage failed on hearing Druro's drunken ravings, and Desmond herself entered the hut.

There, in the darkness, pretending to be Gaynor, she took Druro in her arms, comforted him, vowed eternal love and secured his promise to lead a new life. And Druro, thinking his old sweetheart had come back, was lifted to heaven.

Followed a long fight against the devils of drink, or ponjola, with Desmond always at his elbow to aid. At last, recovered, his ruined farm once more on its feet, Druro set out to find gold again so that he could claim Gaynor and take her away.

He found gold and sent by messenger for Desmond. The latter stayed at the mine while Druro, himself now ill with

"You made a broken down, hopeless wreck of Lundi Druro." Desmond had not meant to say it, but the truth had come flaring out.

fever, went to town for supplies. But Druro's letter had been intercepted and read first by Lypiatt; and in the former's absence Lypiatt showed up, evidently to stake a claim on Druro's property. Desmond laughed at him because she had just staked the plot.

When she entered her hut after dark, Lypiatt awaited her. At once he made her aware that he knew both her sex and her name; and he threatened exposure unless she would destroy Druro's discovery notices, giving him the right to the mine. Goaded to the breaking point, Desmond taunted him with the fact that his wife loved Druro; whereupon Lypiatt sprang at her throat.

Desmond thought her last moment had come, when Druro suddenly entered. The two men grappled. The candle went over. In the darkness there was a terrific struggle ended by a heavy fall, and silence. When Desmond could make a light again, Lypiatt lay dead, Druro unconscious.

Eventually she got Druro to his hut, delirious, and in panic concealed Lypiatt's body in her own hut. But next day she was arrested for murder. She told the magistrate she was a woman.

C Y N T H I A S T O C K L E Y ' S P O N J O L A

Illustrations by Herbert M. Stoops



"But who *are* you?" he asked, astonished. "I don't think that matters," she said bitterly.

Part Six: CHAPTER XVI

IN THAT, however, she was mistaken. The one question that rang up and down Rhodesia for the next few weeks was: Who is Desmond? Who was the woman who had gulled them all so cleverly into accepting without question that she was a man amongst men?—and a bright and hardy specimen at that! Rather too good looking, perhaps, some of

them had thought at first, but had forgiven it when they found *he* didn't exploit the advantage by running after women and tangling up other men's love affairs. Men remembered that now. Other things men remembered too, and spoke of, were *his* pluck, *his* skill at riding, shooting and fishing—anything that was doing in the sports line. *He* had not shirked *his* share of hard knocks in work or play.

These were good memories. Men felt that at least this mysterious woman had not made fools of them—pulled their legs, as the saying is, for the sake of laughing up her sleeve. There were other favorable things too. She never joined in

drunken revels, but it was on record that she had more than once picked up a drunken reveler in the street and got him home. When they remembered how strong and active she was in this way it was impossible for them to say they didn't think she could have polished off Lypiatt; but they were prepared to swear that whatever had happened, it was a square deal and no foul play on her side at least. That was something in the way of a testimonial that not every man in the country could have called forth! And with it came offers of help and bail, not only from friends but from rough men of all classes.

But though deeply touched, Desmond continued to cling to the privacy of the jailer's house while waiting for trial. No one had insisted upon her dropping her male garments, for she had no others and was too big and tall for borrowed ones. She was thankful for that, fearing that once she returned to women's

clothes the hardihood she had assumed so successfully would desert her. Now that her secret was known she thought with horror of the day when she must face the world.

It had been bad enough at the inquest. Everyone who could had crowded into the little Selukine police court full of amazement and curiosity. The proceedings had been very brief, but they gave her plenty of food for meditation now when she sat in her narrow whitewashed room remembering all that had passed. First Doctor Ryan described the fracture of Lypiatt's skull and gave his opinion that it was caused by a blow or a heavy fall on a hard substance such as the granolithic floor of the hut. Incidentally he remarked that Lypiatt had one of the thinnest skulls he had ever seen in the course of his experience. He also described marks on the dead man's face—a long scratch down the cheek that might have been inflicted in a struggle. A sensation arose when he added he had been obliged to treat the accused, who in his opinion had very narrowly escaped death herself, from injuries to her throat.

After the doctor, Lypiatt's manager officially identified the body—it was mentioned that the widow was too ill from shock to attend the proceedings.

Then came evidence intensely interesting to Desmond because of the illumination it shed on the ways of natives. The black policeman stepped up to the witness stand and, by means of an interpreter, very smartly and accurately described his interview with Desmond. When he told how she had said no to his query as to whether Lypiatt had been there, a general sigh went up. It was an unfavorable point. The police boy continued:

"I then walked away as if to leave the camp, but turned aside to where the boys were eating their dinner. I said to them:

"Have you seen Baas Lypiatt?"

"Two of them—Qualimbo and Lenarbo—answered yes."

"I said, 'Where is he?'

"Lenarbo said, 'He is dead in the hut.'

"I said, 'Which hut?'

"He answered, 'Hut of Piccanin Baas.'

"I then went back to Selukine and reported to my Inkos."

Desmond, listening, had marveled. The scene he described was indelibly engraved upon her memory—the group of natives squatting on their haunches, the big uniformed Matabele standing by carelessly twirling his kerries and apparently commenting on the weather, the indifferent answers she could neither hear nor understand. Not one of them had even given a glance in the direction of the mess, yet they must have guessed she was watching even as they had known all the time that Lypiatt lay dead! Sitting there flicking their wooden spoons back and forth into the pot and stuffing mealie-meal into their mouths they were supplying in two potent phrases all the information the policeman required! While she was sighing with relief they were giving her away! Impossible to

"Who did it?" muttered Druro, leaping from his pillows with glittering eyes.

probe their mysterious yet primitive minds to find out if this was sheer callousness, but one thing was clear—no sense of loyalty to her had troubled them. Probably Druro would not have been so lightly betrayed. But the Piccanin Baas was less than nothing to them.

When Qualimbo was examined another enlightening detail transpired. Since the fearsome Baas Lypiatt was dead and Baas Druro by all accounts likely to be in the same case shortly, he had no hesitation in recounting his visit to the Agate to see his Brudda and how Lypiatt had taken and read Druro's note.

(This meant little to the prosecution beyond a proof of Lypiatt's general unscrupulousness, but to Desmond it explained much.)

He further described what had taken place on the morning of the fifteenth while Druro was away fetching Desmond. The boys, taking advantage of their master's absence, were "sleeping" in the bush, but not so soundly as to miss the sight of Lypiatt walking over the camp and taking complete observations. Qualimbo, with a couple of gestures, imitatively conjured up a picture of the white man squinting along a level and measuring with his feet. No one had reported the incident to Druro, he said, because it was not safe to mix yourself up with the business of white men—especially Baas Lypiatt!

That represented the opinion of both Qualimbo and Pofaan on witnessing the further movements of Lypiatt on the afternoon of the same day. They had gone to bed, they stated, at the usual time, and had heard, they said, no sound of quarrel or fight. Even the return of Druro was unknown to them, they swore. It was a surprise to find him in his hut in the morning but not to see him raving out of his mind, for they had known for several days that he was sick.

Asked why they thought the body was in Desmond's hut, Pofaan replied simply:

"The Piccanin Baas's throat was very sore."

(This after her careful efforts with the muffler!)

It might supposedly have been unnecessary for them to get actual sight of what lay in the hut but that would not have been the native way, and Lenarbo had accomplished this during Desmond's short sleep of exhaustion whilst watching Druro. Time enough for a subtle signal, a streak across camp from shaft to hut and the tipping up of a canvas window. One glance within sufficed. Lenarbo had been a warrior and knew how dead men lay.

Curtis, the prospector, then gave evidence of fetching away fever stricken Druro and dumping him in Mrs. Hope's care. It looked strange that Desmond had said nothing to him of the tragedy. If it had been an accident or the outcome of a quarrel, what more natural than to have told Curtis and got his help to bring in the body? The prosecution made this further ugly point without unduly emphasizing it. Another doctor—Ryan was away at the time—gave evidence of receiving Druro at the hospital, unconscious and precariously ill of "black water." He added carelessly that he did not suppose Druro would recover, and no one noticed Desmond blench, for she was so pale already that it could not be observed.

Druro had not left Selukine until late. His horse was tired out and the night pitch dark, but he had insisted on going. It was natural for everyone to suppose that on arrival at camp he had, being a sick man, gone straight to his hut where he was found the next day.

Thus, without effort from anyone and no more than a little economy of frankness on Desmond's part, Druro had been entirely eliminated as a factor in the tragedy. As a result the



Into her narrative of Desmond's life
Loochia put all the malice of a petty nature.

prisoner was committed for trial on a charge of manslaughter and removed to Wankelo where the high court was due to sit shortly.

CHAPTER XVII

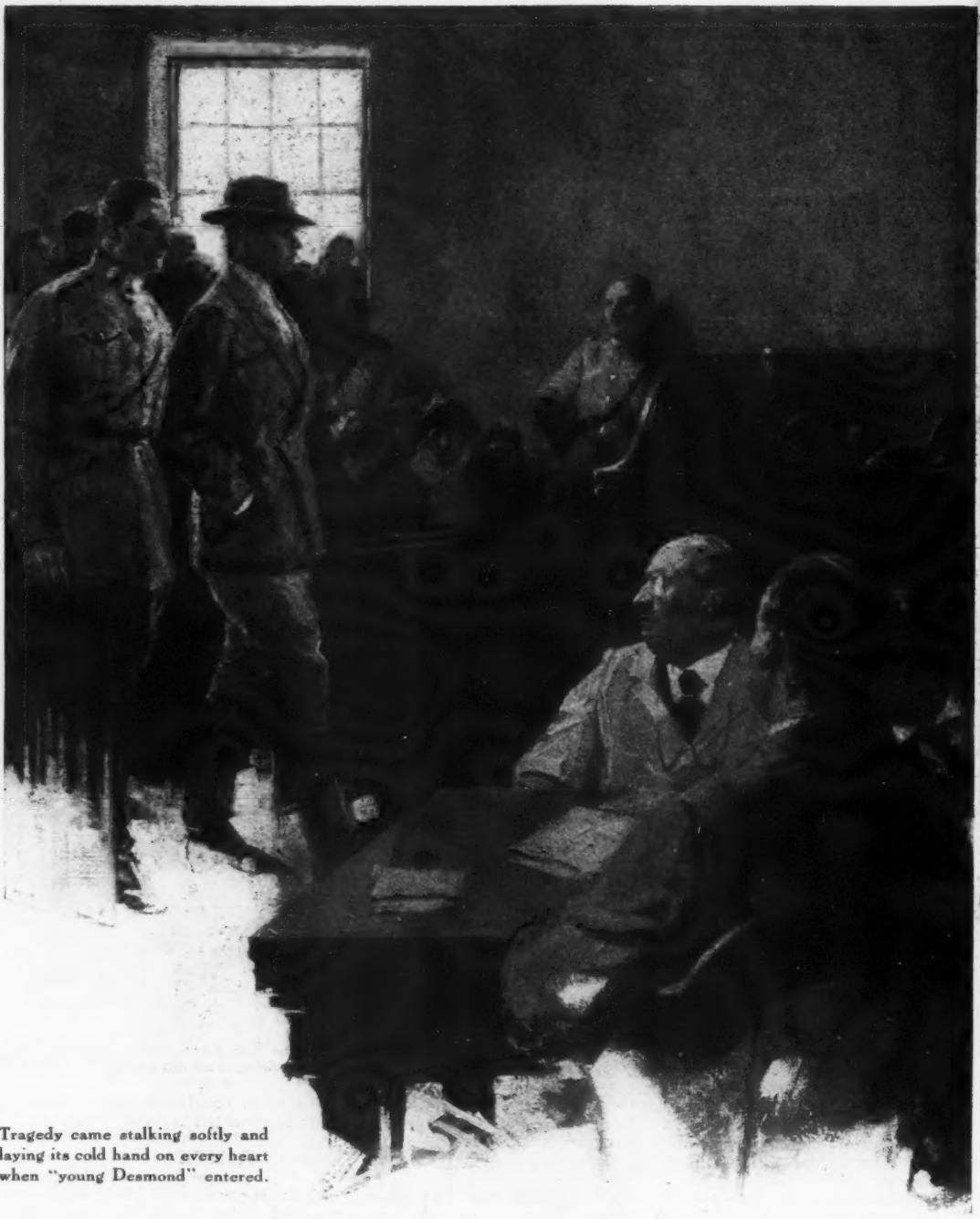
THE only visitors she saw were her lawyer and Emma Guthrie, now established at the Jubilate Deo and making things hum. The mine was brilliantly fulfilling Druro's anticipations.

"Roughly speaking there is about forty thousand pounds' worth within sight in the next few months," the little man told Desmond with the gleam of gold in his eye. "And more to come, or I'm a tinker. The only worry now is to get Lundi out of hospital and you out of jail."

The report on Druro was not good. He hung literally between life and death and had never spoken a connected word since entering hospital.

Guthrie did not go into the matter of Desmond's guilt or innocence, nor the reasons for her disguise. She was Druro's friend, and on the strength of that and the forty thousand he got the best lawyer in the country to defend her.

O'Byrne, K. C., was a brilliant and ambitious Irishman, bursting with eloquence and chivalrous ardor to right the wrongs of pretty women, and he did not need pressing. Besides, who would hesitate to step into the forefront of such a *cause célèbre* as the "Jubilate mystery" promised to become?



Tragedy came stalking softly and laying its cold hand on every heart when "young Desmond" entered.

But he soon found that the greatest obstacle to the *éclat* he promised himself in getting her off was his client herself.

Counsel had to protest at last in exasperation that she seemed to *want* to be convicted. She looked startled and became less taciturn, for that was not the impression she desired to give.

"It's no use going into details," she said. "You've heard the police court evidence. When the native constable asked me if I had seen Lypiatt I said no, and when the sergeant told me he had found Lypiatt dead in my hut I said yes, quite right."

"But that's not enough for *me*. I must have some sort of story of how the thing occurred and why Lypiatt should want to attack you."

On that she gave him a very wary account of Lypiatt's discovery of Druro's rich strike and decision to steal it, being careful to assign his action entirely to greed for gold and

eliminating all reference to the enmity existing between the two men. (She only prayed that no one else would drag that into the case!) Her story fined down in fact to a personal quarrel between Lypiatt and herself about the discovery notices.

"He wanted me to change them and of course I wouldn't and called him a blackguard. One word led to another. I said something particularly galling, I suppose, and he jumped up and took me by the throat. I haven't any idea whether he meant to kill me or merely shake the life out of me, but there was a scuffle, the table overturned, the light went out, the floor was covered with water and I suppose he slipped. I heard him fall with a crack like a coconut hitting a stone, and when I recovered enough to light up he was lying unconscious. I tried to get him round but after a time, realizing that it was no good, I pulled him over to the wall and covered him up. I was rather dazed and I don't quite know what I intended to do



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eventually—hide the body, I think. But the police came before I could do anything."

It was a clever story, and true every word of it—but with all the essential facts left out. O'Byrne could not pick a hole in it though instinct told him there was something missing. However, it is a criminal lawyer's business to make bricks from the straws offered by his client.

Lypiatt's family was sending a K. C. from the Cape to assist the prosecution—a Hollander married to Lypiatt's only sister. O'Byrne knew him for a smart, malicious devil who would stick at nothing to enhance his reputation, and if there was something the accused was keeping back he would surely drag it forth; so O'Byrne decided not to put her in the witness box.

Told of this decision Desmond answered smilingly that it was a good thing as wild horses would never have dragged her there. It was only with great difficulty, and after assuring her the plea did not in the least contradict the evidence, that he could persuade her to plead not guilty. (Continued on page 106)



The Judge



A Witness



Her Counsel

Not Guilty

Characters

CORDELIA SNOW, the defendant.

MR. WILLIAMS, her counsel.

MR. FITCH, District Attorney.

THE JUDGE.

C. M. PRETTYMAN, a witness.

LARS ANDERSON, a Swedish witness.

CLERK.

Jury, spectators, newspapermen, etc.

SCENE—A criminal court room in Upper Hellangone.
*At rise of curtain, everybody is on the stage, standing up.
They soon get tired and sit down.*

CLERK: Hear youse! Hear youse! Hear youse! This court is now in session!

JUDGE: I must warn you that this court room will be cleared if there is any munching on gumdrops. Counsel will proceed.

FITCH (rising): Your Honor, we will prove that this defendant, Mrs. Snow, was caught red-handed in the murder of her husband. There is no controverting the evidence in this case. It was cold-blooded, premeditated murder.

JUDGE: Counsel will confine himself to one syllable words.

FITCH: Our first witness is C. M. Prettyman.

CLERK (calling): C. M. Prettyman! (Prettyman takes the stand and Clerk administers the oath.)

FITCH: Mr. Prettyman, do you know this defendant, Mrs. Snow?

Prettyman: Yes, sir. I live in the same building, right across the hall.

FITCH: Please state what happened on the night of May twenty-eight.

Prettyman: Well, I got drunk and came home and set around awhile and then I went over to the Snows' apartment.

FITCH: Why?

Prettyman: I thought Mr. Snow was out.

FITCH: But he was not out?

Prettyman: Oh, yes, he was! He was down and out. He was dead.

JUDGE (slapping bench): Good!

Prettyman: And Mrs. Snow stood over him revolver in hand, still smoking.

FITCH: Who?

Prettyman: Both of them.

FITCH: Then what happened?

Prettyman: Mrs. Snow asked me to go and call the janitor. She was expecting company and wanted the room straightened up.

FITCH: And did you call the janitor?

Prettyman: I did call the janitor.

FITCH (to Williams): You may take the witness. (He sits down.)

WILLIAMS (rising): Mr. Prettyman, are you married?

Prettyman: No, sir. I'm a widow.

WILLIAMS: What did your wife die of?

Prettyman: She got her throat caught between my fingers.

JUDGE: Good!

WILLIAMS (to Prettyman): That will do. (Prettyman leaves the stand and Williams sits down.)

FITCH (rising): I will call Lars Anderson.

CLERK: Lars Anderson! (Anderson takes the witness stand and Clerk administers the oath.)

FITCH: What is your name?

ANDERSON: Lars Anderson.

FITCH: I thought so. (Catcalls.) What is your occupation?

ANDERSON (assuming a Swedish dialect): I ban janitor up to the Clifton Apartments.

FITCH: Do you know the defendant?

ANDERSON (looking at Mrs. Snow): Sure, that's the murderer.

WILLIAMS (springing up): We object to that, Your Honor!

JUDGE: Objection sustained. (To Anderson) When it's a lady you must call her a murderer. And if she's a Swiss lady, you can call her a Swissess.

FITCH: Now, Mr. Anderson, tell us what happened the night of May twenty-eighth.

ANDERSON: Well, my woman and me, we ban went to a picture show. We seen Ben Turpin. He's cross-eyed. When we got home, we ban had a fight. She wanted I should take a bath and I said no. So just then this Prettyman come to the door and says I should go up to Mrs. Snow's apartment. That's the murderer.

JUDGE: Good!

ANDERSON: So I ban went up to Mrs. Snow's apartment and found Mr. Snow laying on the floor. So I got the vacuum cleaner and swept him up.

FITCH: What makes you think he was murdered.

ANDERSON: That's what Mrs. Snow said. But she ban all the time joking.





Janitor



The Accused



District Attorney

By RING W. LARDNER

Illustrations by Albert Levering

FITCH: The State rests. (*He sits down and Anderson leaves the witness stand.*)

WILLIAMS (rising): Your Honor, we have only one witness, the murderer herself, who will take the stand in her own defense. (*Mrs. Snow goes to the witness stand and Clerk administers the oath.*) Now, Your Honor, it seems to me that we might save this little lady a great deal of embarrassment if you would scrunch this indictment. Things have come to a pretty pass when a beautiful woman has to throw away a day in court every time her husband happens to get murdered.

MRS. SNOW: Don't mind me, Judge. I'm enjoying every minute of it.

JUDGE: Counsel will proceed.

WILLIAMS (*to Mrs. Snow*): State your name.

MRS. SNOW: Cordelia Snow. Cordelia means warm-hearted.

JUDGE: But Snow is cold.

WILLIAMS: Now, Mrs. Snow, why did you shoot your husband?

MRS. SNOW: Oh, I don't know—poisons is so uncertain in this climate!

WILLIAMS: But what was the occasion of your killing him?

MRS. SNOW: No special occasion—just Saturday night.

WILLIAMS: Did you and your husband quarrel very often?

MRS. SNOW: Only when we were together.

WILLIAMS: What did you quarrel about?

MRS. SNOW: Oh, anything! We were both broad-minded.

WILLIAMS: Had you quarreled with him the night of the tragedy?

MRS. SNOW: Tragedy?

WILLIAMS: The night he died.

MRS. SNOW: Oh, that! Why yes, I suppose we quarreled.

WILLIAMS: What makes you suppose you quarreled?

MRS. SNOW: Well, he was home.

WILLIAMS: And did you always quarrel when he was home?

MRS. SNOW: Oh, no! Sometimes he was home and I was out.

WILLIAMS: Did that happen very often?

MRS. SNOW: Only when I could arrange it.

WILLIAMS (*to Fitch*): You may take the witness. (*He sits down and Fitch rises.*)

FITCH: Now, Mrs. Snow, how long were you married to Snow?

MRS. SNOW: Right up to the time he died.

FITCH: I am through with the witness.

MRS. SNOW: And it's mutual, believe me!

WILLIAMS (rising): We rest, Your Honor. (*Mrs. Snow leaves the witness stand.*)

JUDGE: Counsel may have one minute apiece for summing up.

WILLIAMS (rising): Your Honor and queer looking people of the jury: This case reminds me of the woman who went to the photograph gallery and asked the proprietor if he took pictures of children. Stop me if you've heard it. Well, this woman went into a photograph gallery and asked the proprietor, Mike, if he took pictures of children. "Yes, ma'am, we do," replied Mike. Stop me if you've heard this one. "Well," said the woman, "and how much are they?" She was referring to the price of photographs of children. "Three dollars a dozen," replied Mike, the proprietor of the photograph gallery. "Well," said the woman smilingly, "I guess I will have to come back later. I've only got eleven." Now, Your Honor and ladies and gentlemen of the jury, this case is an exact parallel of the story I have just told. This defendant, Cordelia Snow, would never have killed Snow had it not been for the fact that she still lacked a dozen husbands.

(He sits down in practically complete silence.)

JUDGE: I will now call on the district attorney, Mr. Fitch, a man who won his spurs in a Swiss livery stable and a prominent Rotarian in Fitchburg, Mass.

FITCH (rising): Your Honor and jury: This case reminds me of an even older story than that which my distinguished colleague tried so hard and failed to tell. It seems that two gentlemen, Pat and Mike, were traveling through the hill country of Kentucky. It was very still. At length they came in sight of a cabin in the clearing. The only sign of habitation was the remnant of a mule and the tall figure of a man who leaned against a tree, spearing hazel nuts. "Wonder if he can talk," said Pat to Mike. "Try him," said Mike to Pat. "Well, stranger," said Pat, "this is a great country." "I like it," replied the Kentuckian. "Have you lived here all your life?" asked Pat. Kentuckian. Now, Your Honor and friends, we demand that this defendant, Cordelia Snow, be found guilty and fined no less than five dollars and costs. (*He sits down in a hubbub of quiet.*)

JUDGE: Would the jury like to ask any questions?

FOREMAN: Your Honor, was the deceased the defendant's legal husband?

JUDGE (*to Fitch and Williams*): How about it, boys?

FITCH AND WILLIAMS: No question about that.

FOREMAN: Well, then, who had a better right to shoot him?

JUDGE: Gentlemen, this case is out, like a Yankee pinch hitter.

(CURTAIN)



By REX BEACH



*A Story of a Town where
Everything, including Ghosts,
Must be Up-to-Date*

Illustrations by Wallace Morgan

THREE characteristics of the human countenance Joe Thomas abhorred—curly hair, a Grecian profile and romantic eyes. Physical perfection is all right in a museum; in the home it is loathsome. If Adonis had a room mate—or better, a barber—it is safe to say the latter yearned to cut his throat, for who could repeatedly shave a cheek, a chin, as smooth and as flawless as flesh can be; who could daily vaseline a head of wavy midnight hair with just the right curl to tempt unruly feminine fingers without praying for pimples and dandruff?

Nevertheless, that is precisely what Joe Thomas was called upon to do, for the cheeks, the chin, the throat, the hair were his. Out from his mirror gazed a pair of haunting, languorous eyes fringed like the gentian. He had tried cutting off the lashes, but they came in longer and thicker than ever, and they curled. His was the fatal curse of beauty.

Joe had been marked by this hideous peculiarity as a child; in fact, he and Myrtle Sawyer had been the prettiest children in town and they had won prizes at baby shows. Myrtle, as she grew older, lived down her past, but with Joe the disgrace lingered. Even after his voice changed and the pink down of adolescence appeared upon his lip, people continued to refer to him as "that perfect boy," and some of the women spoke of the dimples in his back. Joe's face was that of a sixteen year old cherub and his lips were like rosebuds, but at references such as these there issued from him language—well, language that went

with a full and unkempt beard. When he grew old enough to envy the ugliness of other boys and to realize that he could neither freckle nor grow warts, no matter how he tried, a burning resentment took charge of him and he fought with his playmates. Frequently he was licked by these homely boys, but in spite of his desperate disregard of consequences his perfect features possessed the resiliency of rubber and malignant nature healed the marks of battle. Nothing he could do resulted in permanent disfigurement. As age laid muscle upon his frame, he more often came home a winner and by the time he had graduated from "Tech" as an electrical engineer, his reputation as a willing and able rough-and-tumbler had become such that only comparative strangers complimented him upon his looks.

He was beginning to hope that he had finally laid his ghost when one day Sol Ginsberg, a friend of public school days, wrote him from Hollywood urging him to come West and go into "pictures." Ginsberg had gone to California as an assistant camera man and through the display of talents entirely unsuspected by his schoolmates he had risen, meteor-like, to the dignity of producer.

"I can make of you a big hit," the enthusiastic Ginsberg wrote, "if only you screen as good as you look, and I bet you would. We can easily change your name to something classy, like Pedro de Ventura, now that these Wop leading men have got the women boiling. All I expect is I should get a nice long term contract



"You thnake in the grath! Wait!" lisped Miss Donaldson, withering Hyman with a glare of hatred.

e Talking Vase

in case I put you over. It beats the wireless business, Joe, which ain't got anything solid behind it."

Joe started to answer the letter but thought better of it, for the postal regulations governing what may be transmitted through the mails are rigid. Instead, he swallowed the temptation and went on with his radio experiments. But thereafter he detested motion pictures. That detestation ripened into a positive hatred when Myrtle Sawyer won a beauty contest which carried with it a trip to the Coast and a rôle in "Passion's Pawn," a crashing super-special in preparation by the Hyman Film Productions.

Sick with apprehension, cold with dread, Joe called upon Myrtle the evening the announcement appeared in the local paper.

"You don't intend to accept this crazy offer, do you?" he inquired.

"Why, of course I do!" Myrtle's blue eyes were starry with excitement. "I'm as thrilled as a bunny, Joe."

"What the devil is your family thinking of?" he growled.

"Why, Joe! It's the chance of a lifetime."

"Sure! Chance to be mauled around by some plumber in a sport shirt; chance to be thrown over a cliff into the arms of Handsome Harold, the perfect male thirty-eight. If I ever see you kissing one of those 'nature's noblemen' with a divided chin and moveable eyebrows—I—That's all the movies are—kissing games!"

Miss Sawyer flushed. "You always hated kissing games, didn't you?"

"Of course. Mother's friends licked my face shiny until my beard got rough. They kissed me until I smelled sour. If you'll cut out this nonsense—"

"It isn't nonsense," Myrtle declared earnestly. "I'm going to make my fortune."

"You don't need a fortune. I'll—"

"It's my chance for a career. Motion pictures is the fourth largest business in America, Joe. I must think of my future."

"There's a big future in electrical supplies and radio equipment, too. I'm working out a new telephone—'The Phone Beautiful,' I call it. Why talk into an ugly iron thing instead of into a vase or an ornamental—"

"You're so practical, so—matter of fact! So is everybody." Myrtle sighed. "Girls want romance, adventure. Of course I may not screen well—"

"No danger of that." Joe frowned darkly. "If you tackle this, I'm going to start right in burning down moving picture theaters."

Myrtle, of course, was flattered by Joe's jealousy, but it was more flattering by far to be selected as the most beautiful of ten thousand beautiful girls, and before her the gates of the world had opened. Through them she glimpsed an enchanting realm of glittering possibilities. Fame beckoned her and Fortune smiled. What girl could hesitate? Long and earnestly Joe argued but in time Myrtle went West.

The Talking Vase

Several months later, Joe was surprised to receive a call from Sol Ginsberg, President of Gins-Art Productions, Incorporated. Mr. Ginsberg had a single track mind and he had come for an answer to his letter.

"You got a picture face, Joe, if ever I saw one and I've seen a million. Maybe if you'd show me you can act a little I'd put you right in my next serial."

"I'll show you exactly how I can act," Joe began venomously; then his brow cleared and he laughed outright. "Did you come all the way from the Coast to offer me a job?"

"N-no. I had other business. You ain't got to act much, Joe. Leave it to the director. Got any stills?"

"I'm an electrician, not a bootlegger."

"Still pictures, photographs. It's types we—"

"I hate everything about moving pictures, and I loathe moving picture actors."

"All the same, it pays better than stringin' wires." Ginsberg cast a disdainful eye over Joe's place of business.

Joe opened his mouth to explain that he was an engineer, an inventor, but he doubted if Sol would understand the difference so he said: "Come in here. I want to talk to you." He led the caller into his office and seated him. Then, "Tell me, how are you getting along?"

Ginsberg shrugged. "Oh, we all got our troubles, I s'pose! Pictures ain't so good lately. Competition, you know. Two fellers I'd like to kill, Joe; the guys that invented competition and overhead. Compared with them robbers, Frank and Jesse James was a couple of nice boys. No sooner I spend a fortune making a star than along comes Ad Hyman or the Notable or some other bird of prey and hires her away. Only one artist on the lot you can absolutely depend to work every day and that's the famous Hebrew heavy, Mr. Morris W. Overhead."

"What sort of a fellow is Hyman?" Joe inquired curiously.

"Don't ask me! I wouldn't talk about him. He's a vulture, Joe. It ain't enough I should lose to him Miriam Donaldson and Bush Thorndyke, the two best money getters in the business; he takes with 'em my best continuity writer by offering him screen credit. On top of that somebody at the home office hears the great Anna Turin sing 'Tosca' and right away signs her up to make five Gins-Art features, with a private car both ways from New York. Anna Turin!" Ginsberg moaned like an autumn breeze.

"I supposed Turin was a great find."

"Ain't I telling you? They couldn't of found another like her if they looked a year. Her first picture cost us a hundred and eighty thousand dollars, two script writers and the best director on the lot. Poor Jimmy Lord! I just left him in West Baden. Nervous indigestion and shellshock. He cries steady and can't eat only bran muffins. Battle Creek is the place for him, but he couldn't stand the name."

"What is the picture like?"

Ginsberg stared at the speaker with the eye of a hunted deer. "One reel of titles and action and six reels of close-ups of the star. Sure! Pictures is a great business. Another hit by Turin and Gins-Art goes under the hammer. Already her spirit control has advised her to hire a lawyer for fear we break the contract."

"Spirit control?"

"Sure. Since this feller Doyle got his name in the papers, Hollywood does nothing but tip tables and hold slate writings. The bootleggers have turned mediums—more money in it and they don't have to split with the police. It's so you can't sign up even a character woman without she should first consult the unseen world, and then you don't know if you got a good signature to the contract or the monicker of some dear departed that wouldn't hold in court. It looks like Ad Hyman has got a drag in the spirit world, because all the good actors that quit Gins-Art right away sign with him. Crooked business men I can get along with, Joe, when they're alive, but how you going to compete with a lot of slick ghosts? I ask you."

Here was something that interested Joe Thomas and for some time he questioned the producer. Friendship, perhaps it was, that induced the latter to lay bare his hidden worries. Truly, those worries were by no means trivial, for Turin was a terrible quince and her contract alone, if carried out, was enough to wreck a stronger organization than Gins-Art. Moreover, it did indeed look as if Sol's company was on the spirit blacklist, for what few capable people it still retained were threatening to desert and go to his rival.

"But there, I been crying about my troubles and you probably got plenty of your own," the picture man sighed. "Business good?"

"Fine! I've perfected a new idea in telephones—The Phone

Beautiful—and it's bound to go over. Why not make the telephone a thing of artistic beauty?"

"Why not?" Ginsberg nodded vacantly. Then: "How about three hundred a week, Joe? And if I put you across—"

Mr. Thomas exploded. "Not for three thousand. I tell you I'm poisoned on pictures."

"Then why you been taking all this time—"

"Because—" The speaker flushed. "It's on account of Myrtle. She won that beauty contest of the Hyman Film Company."

"I know." Ginsberg smiled wanly. "It's the only piece of luck I had that he got her instead of Gins-Art."

"Why? Isn't she any good?" Joe inquired hopefully.

"She's a lemon! Mind you now, Myrtle I like. Ain't I known her all my life? But for an actress—I'd sooner have a trained seal. This here 'Passion's Pawn' is a complete flop."

"Then I'm afraid"—Joe rose and took a nervous turn about the room—"there's something in what I've heard."

"What you heard?"

"That Hyman is interested in her; wants to marry her. She was engaged to me when she left here."

"So? That's tough. But Joe, a lotta girls have thought Hyman wanted to marry 'em and he didn't. That's how he works."

"I've been waiting for her to get sick of the game and come home, but he has signed her up for a year."

"He should worry if she can't act, with the company paying her salary. Of course she don't know she's rotten. None of 'em do. I s'pose her spirit control—"

"Has she fallen for that stuff?"

"I don't know. Most of 'em have. Lord, Joe, if you was a good medium instead of a bum electrician, we'd—clean up."

After a moment Joe Thomas astonished his caller by quietly declaring:

"I am."

"Am what?"

"A—medium."

"Hush!"

"I'm psychic, in a way. Anyhow, I can talk with the dead, if that would do us any good."

Sol Ginsberg breathed heavily; then after a searching stare he reached for his hat and rose, saying, "Well, Joe, I gotta be gettng along."

But the other laid a detaining hand upon his arm. "Wait. You've been complaining about malicious spirits ruining your business. Suppose I could put you in touch with some friendly spooks that would boost you and knock Hyman."

"Are you kidding? Of course there ain't any such thing as spirits. All the same I'd be willing to sign up one that I could count on and let him name his own salary."

"If I could convert you I'd have no trouble convincing those people in Los Angeles, would I?"

"Convince 'em of what? Already they believe anything they're told. It's me you got to convince."

"Very well. Suppose you heard a spirit voice? Suppose it answered questions, foretold the future, withstood every test?"

"Honest, Joe, to try such foolishness on me is wasting time. It can't be done."

"Wait and see. You'll have to admit there are forces in nature vastly powerful, although unseen; dynamic possibilities we know almost nothing about. Well, I've discovered a method of communicating with the dead that none of your mediums know anything about. Billy Sunday never snatched a brand from the burning as quickly as I propose to yank you out of your disbelief. Sol, before you leave this room you are going to talk with your ancestors."

"Ha, Yiddish ghosts! All right, I'll fall for anything once. Come on!"

It was nearly three hours later when Ginsberg left Joe Thomas's place of business. He wrung the engineer's hands and laughed excitedly. "Say, all the luck in the world ain't bad, after all. I'm a fifty minute egg and when you get me going you've done something. Most of it I don't understand yet. I've been selling some of my Gins-Art stock on the quiet, but if your ghosts will talk in California like they do here—"

"They'll talk much better."

"Then I'm going to buy it in again. Wire me when you're ready to come and I'll have my pressman plant a story in every Los Angeles paper. Jimmy Lord will be back by that time. He's been to some of them séances with Turin, and he's a bear on make-up. Take a tip, Joe, and grab a few shares

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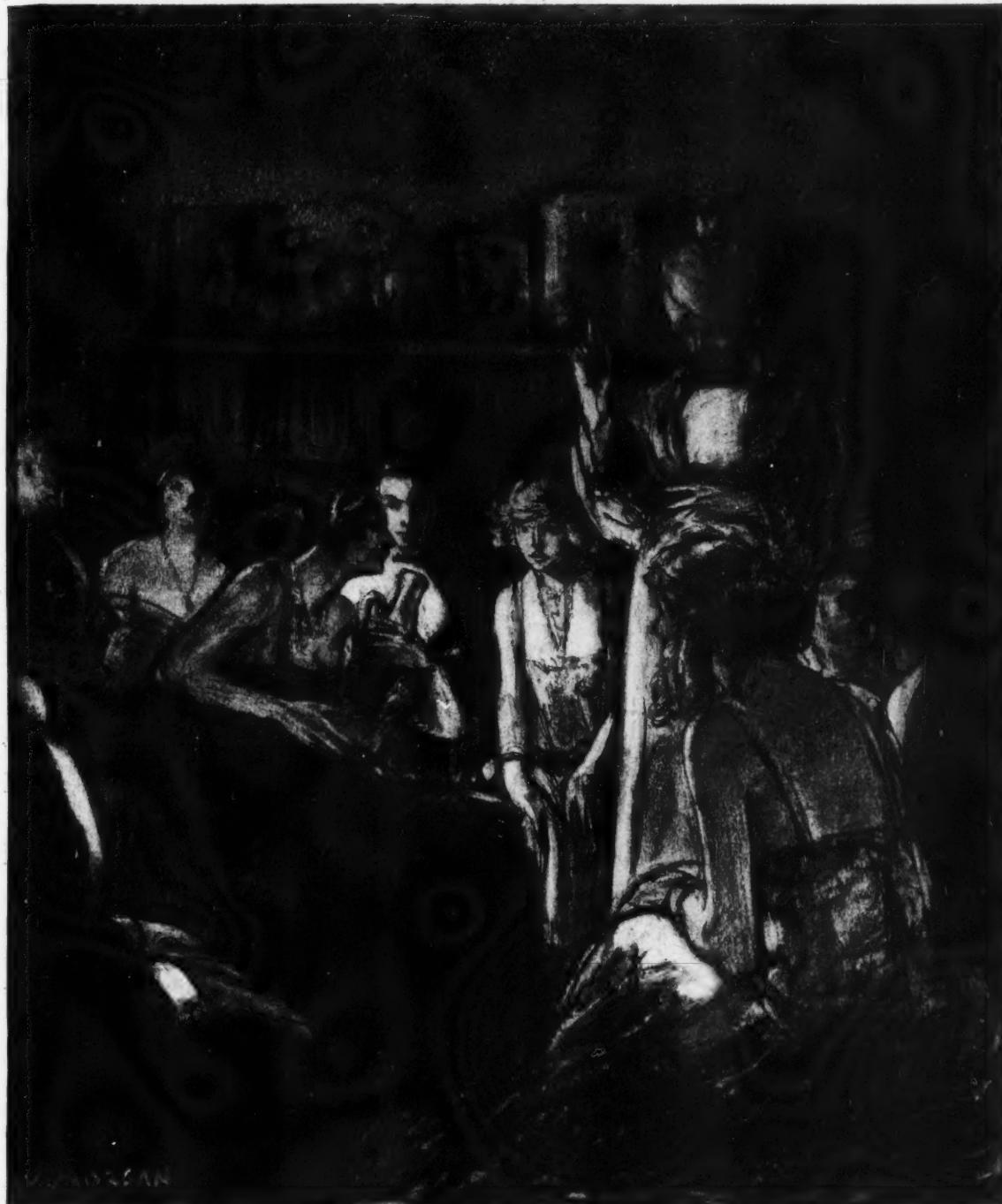
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Again came the eerie whispering from the shadow world. "I am waiting!" declared Madame Turin.

of Gins-Art for yourself. These old-home spirits of ours will send 'em to par."

The more intellectual members of the Hollywood moving picture colony were interested one morning to read that Professor Tremblay, the eminent scientist, had arrived on his way to the Orient in furtherance of his experiments in psychomancy, a particular phase of psychic research upon which he was the leading authority. The professor was en route to the interior of India where he had previously spent several years studying spirit phenomena, and while he was reticent about the evidence already gathered, nevertheless he intimated that his forthcoming book would create a sensation.

Several people, Madame Turin among others, telephoned the

investigator at his hotel but succeeded only in speaking with his secretary, who informed them that Professor Tremblay was distressed at the amount of publicity he had received and positively would not consider anything in the way of a public appearance or a lecture. He was engrossed for the present in a series of exhaustive experiments with the famous Talking Vase of which no doubt they had heard.

What was the Talking Vase? The secretary was amazed that the phenomenon was unknown to his hearers, inasmuch as the journal of the International Society had lately been full of it. It was a curious relic the professor had stumbled upon and psychic circles were in an uproar over it. Rightly, too, since it had rendered former methods of spirit communication antiquated.

News of this sort naturally created a buzz among Madame

The Talking Vase



smashing at a tennis ball that Tilden could not have reached from the end of a springboard. Nor was that the half of it. "Fragrant Myrtle" was a skilful and an adventurous fisher-woman, also a crack shot—she had the clothes to show it. Joe feared to turn the page lest he should discover that she was also a high diver and dressed that part. Her passionate fondness

Turin's psychically inclined friends; that buzz became a murmur when the scientist visited the Gins-Art lot.

Pressed for an explanation, Tremblay confided that Conan Doyle's experiments with spirit photography had induced him to take to India with him an expert camera man; hence his visit to the moving picture capital.

Doctor Tremblay was a handsome, swarthy, impressive man. He wore a magnificent, glossy black beard parted in the middle after the oriental fashion. Ginsberg, Jimmy Lord and Moe Apple, the Gins-Art head electrician, spent the better part of the day with him.

Myrtle Sawyer was genuinely surprised when Joe Thomas phoned her that evening explaining that he had come clear to the Coast just to see her, and she welcomed him when he called a half hour later. Myrtle's gladness at sight of him was unaffected, but Joe soon discovered that a change had come over her; she was no longer the girl he had known. Camera-blight had stricken her. Myrtle had been a modest creature, a trifle shy in fact, and she had never displayed the faintest sign of conceit over her abundant good looks. But the movies had changed all that. Her personal appearance concerned her deeply now; it absorbed her; she referred to it frequently and showed Joe a bewildering collection of stills, the while she talked about camera angles and back lighting and soft focuses. After they had sufficiently admired her photographs, she read him some thrilling press notices of "Passion's Pawn" and her work as the captive slave. At least they thrilled her. Next she showed Joe a fan magazine in which was an illustrated interview headed, "Fragrant Myrtle Sawyer, the Wonder Girl."

Joe read the story with some surprise, for Myrtle, it seemed, had in the course of a few months developed into an all-around athlete. There was a half-tone of her in riding breeches and polo belt kissing the nostril of a livery horse; another of her in golf clothes removing a divot by means of a left-handed grip on a right-handed mashie; and a third view of the Wonder Girl

for the out-of-doors, he read, arose only from her intense vitality and perfect health, but there was another, a softer, a more womanly side to her character—she was a fancy cook and adored bungalow aprons. She loved her parents and all dumb animals. Myrtle Sawyer was a girl "you'd like to take home and introduce to your mother." Joe was glad there was one statement in the ghastly parody to which he could subscribe—he'd like to take her home and introduce her to his mother, all right—with instructions to give her a good spanking.

"It is all a part of Mr. Hyman's publicity campaign," Myrtle explained. "He's a wonderful man."

"Um-m! When do you start work on the next picture?"

"I don't know. We haven't found a script yet. He insists on a proper vehicle; so many stars have been killed by bad stories. I'm not really a star, of course, but he says—"

"Honestly, Myrtle, do you like this sort of thing?" Joe indicated the "Fragrant Myrtle" interview.

The girl flushed. "Certainly not. I hate it, just as I hate horses and guns and cooking. But I never earned a dollar in my life and it's such fun to buy things with your own money. It's all like a dream. There are so few things a girl can do, Joe. When she's lucky enough to have a career offered her, why—she owes it to herself and to her family to make the most of her opportunity."

"It's a pretty good career to marry and live happily ever after. That's what all your photoplays are written about."

Myrtle nodded. A yearning light crept into her eyes; upon her face there came an expression the camera had never caught; and Joe Thomas realized that at heart she was still the Myrtle he knew and adored. He understood her, too. Poor, foolish, dazzled little kid! She was indeed walking in a dream. Her faith, her yearning, her determination to become rich and great were very natural, very girlish. He loved her the more tenderly for them.

Later, when he told her good night, he took her in his arms and kissed her. She struggled faintly, she protested in a shaky voice, but there were tears in her eyes and the hands that held him off really clung to him. He was too wise, however, to take advantage of her momentary mood.

It was due to Madame Turin's persistence that Professor Tremblay finally consented to appear informally before her and her friends and demonstrate his mastery of psychic forces. As a return for the many courtesies of Sol Ginsberg, he suggested that his experiments be conducted in the latter's home.

On the appointed evening, the president of Gins-Art entertained a dozen or more guests at dinner, among whom were Miriam Donaldson and Bush Thorndyke, his former stars, and also Ad Hyman, their present employer. In spite of their poisonous rivalry, the two producers maintained an outward show of friendship. Tonight Hyman was more than skeptica

of the forthcoming demonstration; he twitted Sol upon his conversion to spiritualism and his remarks were edged with ill concealed malice.

"Because Madame Turin gets me to stage a ghost dance in my house, is it a sign I believe in such things?" the host protested. "Anyhow it's a free show and you got a good dinner thrown in, so what you kicking about? For all I know this Tremblay is a faker. There's fakers even in the fillum business. And for a while they get away with it." Ginsberg spoke with a smile, but he narrowed his eyes at Hyman.

Madame Turin resented the mental attitude of both men and said so. "The idea of criticising a man of his eminence! Of course, I'm only a child in my understanding of the subject; nevertheless I could tell you of things I've seen, demonstrations that would surprise you. Whether or not you believe in a higher plane of existence, you will admit that we poor humans are drawn in opposite directions by conflicting forces, some beneficent, others malignant; forces of good and evil. If, through spiritual understanding, we attune ourselves to those beneficent powers they will inevitably sweep us onward to success. That, at least, is my theory."

"Maybe you're right," Hyman told her. "Anyhow, it's like that in the picture business; some of us succeed in everything we touch. Why? Because we have the power to do big things. Others fail." Ginsberg felt something coming and essayed an interruption but the speaker went on: "When actors ask me for advice, I tell them to get aboard a going concern, and line up with the successful, growing firms that can do the most for them. If your cart is hitched to a sick horse, cut the traces. Don't rats leave a sinking ship?"

Hyman addressed this question directly to Stella Green, last of the Gins-Art stars. Miss Green was known to screen lovers as "California's Passion Flower, the Girl with the Million Dollar Back," and Ginsberg considered her the best vamp in the business. He read the double meaning in Hyman's words and a cold sweat broke out upon him. If the Passion Flower jumped, he was ruined.

"You said something, Ad," he declared. "It's only rats do like that."

Miss Donaldson spoke up in her lisping, childish voice. "Buth had a demonthrathion. Didn't you, Buth?"

Bush Thorndyke, pressed for details, confessed: "It happened while Miriam and I were making 'The Bride of Hate.' You remember the scene where the castle burns and I swing myself across the moat on the telephone wire?"

"Where he ethcapeth from the Cage of Death and hatheweth me from Duke Borith."

Ginsberg nodded vigorously. "I should for-

get it in a hurry, when the set cost thirty thousand dollars."

"Well, I had a slate-writing and it warned me to beware of fire and water," said Thorndyke, "so I pretended to have a sprained wrist and they doubled me. The wire broke and that double went to the hospital for six weeks."

"I remember that, too," Ginsberg asserted. "Like it was yesterday. He had a day and night nurse."

Hyman beamed. "On our lot, we have never hurt a principal. We're careful of our artists. Anyhow, those cheap stunt pictures are cold."

During and after dinner more guests arrived and by nine o'clock, the hour set for Tremblay's appearance, the party included a good many of the local film notables.

The professor was late, but when he came he carried with him a large case which he carefully laid upon the hall table. Alone with Ginsberg in the latter's bedroom, he inquired, "Is Lord here?"

"Sure. Him and Moe had their dinner in the basement and everything is set. But the nerve of some people! Ad Hyman is after the 'Passion Flower.' In my own house! And it wouldn't surprise me if already she's jumped! He offers her seventeen-fifty a week and guarantees court costs if I sue. The *wiper*!" The producer mopped his moist brow. "Such a night! And on top of a wire from New York to hold up Turin's salary check till they can cover it! Just as well I should ask her to hold her breath that long."

"Ladies and gentlemen," Professor Tremblay addressed the assembled guests after his introduction, "I am not here in the guise of a necromancer, but as a cold, scientific investigator of



"Fragrant Myrtle Sawyer, the Wonder Girl," Joe read. Poor, foolish, dazzled kid!

The Talking Vase

spirit phenomena. The theory that intelligence is everlasting, that mind travels beyond the grave, that life continues after death is neither new nor original. It is one of man's oldest beliefs, and to this investigation I ask that you bring neither a blind, unreasoning acquiescence nor a stubborn disbelief. Let me urge you to maintain open minds. That is the only true scientific attitude.

"It has been my practice to appear only before academic audiences; therefore I declined Mr. Ginsberg's first invitation to come here. But upon second thought I realized the dignity and importance of your profession. I realized that here I should meet only the keenest minds; people with level heads and brilliant intuition. So it occurred to me that among you there might be an intellect capable of solving the occult mystery that has baffled the most learned of our purely scientific investigators."

There was heartfelt applause at this tribute to the higher intelligence of screen celebrities.

Madame Turin murmured audibly: "He's wonderful. And so young!"

Through his fine black beard the professor's teeth gleamed pleasantly. "Now for a brief history of the unique relic I have brought with me. Several years ago I was engaged in important research work which took me to the Province of Poopar, four hundred and eighty miles northwest of Calcutta. There I was the guest of the Rajah, a very old man at the time. Of course I had heard of the famous Talking Vase of Poopar—who has not? But I put it down as a native superstition, a myth. Imagine my surprise, therefore, when my host assured me that it did indeed exist, although none but the eyes of Yogis and priests had ever beheld it, none but holy men had held converse with it. It is perhaps a tribute to my standing in the world of occultism that I was finally permitted to see the vase, the most remarkable phenomenon the Orient has yet produced, and to test its powers. My report to the International Society created a sensation. I was regarded as a madman, for I reported that it actually spoke. The Rajah's family is one of the oldest in the East. This urn from time immemorial had contained the sacred ashes of his forebears and he declared that the voice was that of his ancestors!"

There was a stir and a rustle from the audience. Miriam Donaldson's hand sought that of her manly co-star, Bush Thorndyke, and she chattered:

"It giveth me the creepeth! I'm all over gooth fletch."

Ad Hyman leaned forward to whisper: "It's the bunk. But I've got to hand it to him. He's great."

Tremblay continued: "Inasmuch as my knowledge of the Indian language was incomplete and the Rajah had to interpret for me, naturally the demonstration was not entirely satisfactory. Nevertheless I proved beyond question that there was no trick, no fake about the voice, and I offered the Rajah any sum for the relic. He refused to consider it.

"One day while tiger hunting I saved the life of his son, and later when the Rajah died I induced the young man to surrender the vase into my keeping with the understanding that I never leave it out of my possession and that I return it to the temple at Poopar in two years. He also exacted the strict proviso that I use it only for scientific demonstrations before serious minded people, explaining how easy it would be for an unscrupulous person to enrich himself by consulting it on business affairs. You see the voice is truly the voice of an oracle; it forecasts the future as unerringly as it reveals the past. That promise, ladies and gentlemen, I have scrupulously adhered to."

Madame Turin wished to know if the voice spoke only its native tongue.

"Ah! Now comes one of the strangest features of this bewildering business; one that has baffled the keenest minds of Europe and America. Shortly after the vase came into my possession, I noticed that it occasionally spoke an English word. Gradually it came to speak English entirely, although with an accent not unlike that of my old friend, the Rajah. Within the last six months every trace of accent has disappeared.

"I will bore you no further with explanations. The vase is here and you are free to test its powers."

With these words the professor opened the case he had brought with him, exposing to view an antique urn or pitcher with a slender, graceful neck and a long, curving, covered spout not unlike that of a watering pot. The vessel appeared to be made of some composition lighter than clay; its body was covered with crude figures in bas-relief. The audience pressed close and examined it inside and out.

"For our purpose we shall need a smaller room, one capable of accommodating perhaps a dozen chairs," the professor announced.

"Use the library," Ginsberg offered, and thither Tremblay bore his precious burden.

"Excellent," he said upon his return. "Now then, I assume that most of you are convinced that there is such a thing as mind reading—thought transference—so I will not—"

"Wait a minute," Hyman broke in. "Nobody ever read my mind, and I don't believe it can be done, on the level."

Ginsberg laughed loudly at this. "First you got to have a mind, Ad, before anybody can read it. You don't ask the professor should accomplish the impossible, I hope?"

"So?" Hyman wheeled swiftly upon the speaker. "Maybe he can tell what I'm thinking right now. The ladies can leave the room for a minute, so he can speak it right out loud. And if you go with them it won't hurt anybody's feelings. I'm from Missouri. If I'm going to join the order give me all the works. What do you mean, 'thought transference'?"

Madame Turin was distressed at this interruption. "There is always a disturbing element at every séance," she complained. "Skeptics and mental defectives should stay at home."

"Pardon! This is in no sense a séance." Tremblay raised his hands in good natured protest. "I flatter myself that I have progressed far beyond that stage. Mr. Hyman is right. It was my mistake in assuming that you had gone further in your studies. However, I think I can readily prove to him that—well, that thoughts are things. Thought transference is one of our first steps. Mr. Hyman, will you oblige me by speaking a number? Any number of two figures."

"I've got you. Twenty-three."

"Twenty-three." The professor nodded and stroked his forked beard. "Yonder is a telephone. Please call the Hotel Ambassador and ask for my secretary, Mr. Henry Graves."

Hyman did as directed. There was a brief delay, then: "Hello! Professor Tremblay's room, please . . . Mr. Henry Graves?" Hyman covered the receiver with his palm and announced, "He's on the wire."

"Tell him, please, that I am thinking of a number and ask him what it is."

Several people crowded close to Hyman while he repeated the message, holding the instrument away from his ear so that they, too, could hear the secretary's answer. There was a moment's delay, then the bystanders gasped. Hyman hung up and turned with a foolish grin. "You win. He called the turn."

Sol Ginsberg spoke above the chorus of exclamations, saying: "Of course, Ad, if it had been only you thinking of that number instead of all of us, it would of fell off the wire. It takes a mental athlete to shoot a message that far."

Tremblay now had the respectful attention of even the most incredulous. Over his evening clothes he slipped an elaborate oriental robe, upon his head he placed a large turban which came well down over his ears; then he called for envelopes and paper.

"Please write your questions, sign and seal them in the envelopes. Be careful that nobody sees what you write. I assume that all of you have lost dear ones—that you wish to learn whether they fare well or ill and whether life after death indeed exists. That is the most vital problem that vexes the human mind and I urge you to avail yourselves in all seriousness of this opportunity which may never be repeated. A supreme wisdom is at your call. Make the most of it."

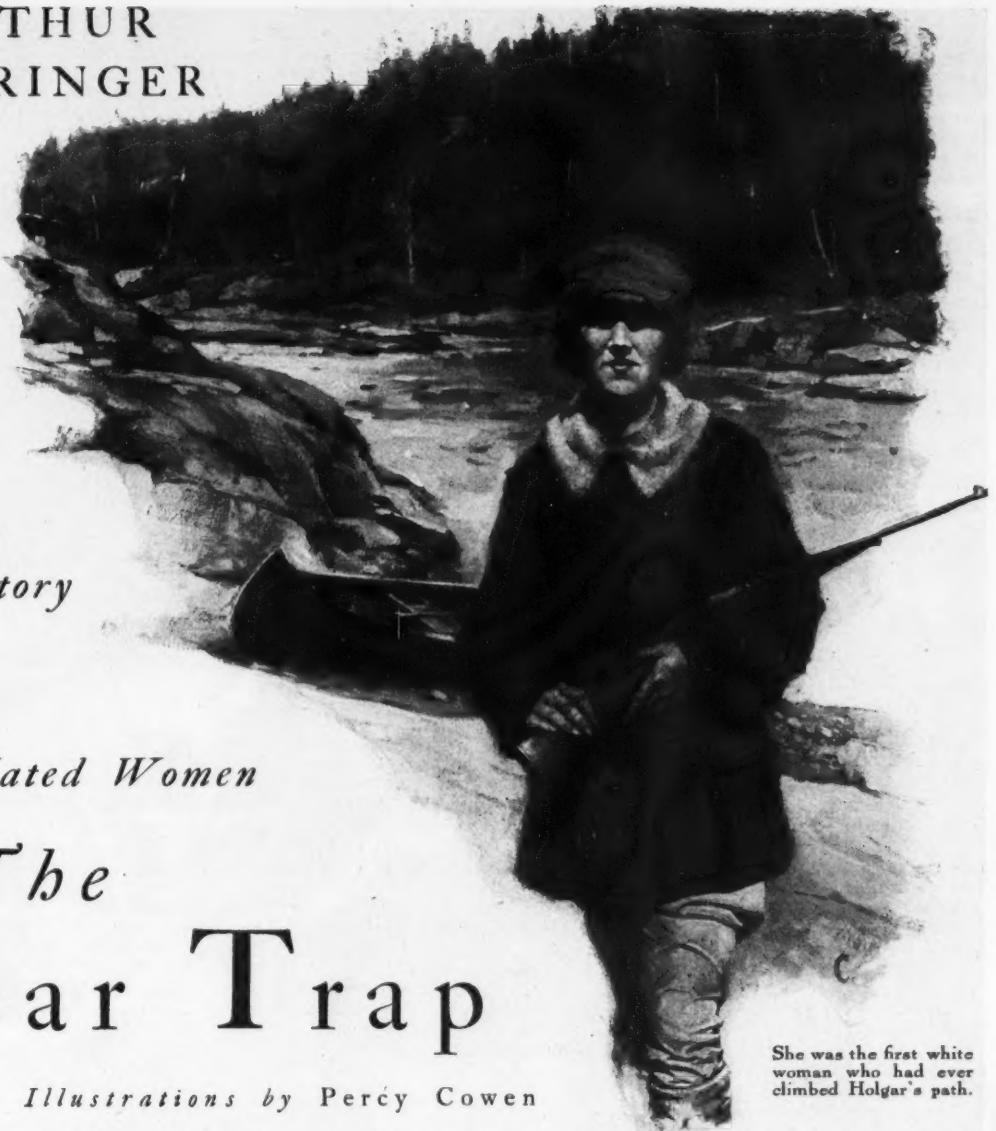
Amid a great chewing of pencils and a heavy furrowing of brows these instructions were followed. Meanwhile the professor called for an assistant and for some receptacle in which to collect the sealed questions. Ginsberg hustled out of the room and shouted loudly for Moe Apple.

Apple appeared with a black cloth bag and when the last query had been signed and sealed he passed through the audience and each guest with his own hands dropped his envelope into the bag. Tremblay next requested Apple to upset the bag and dump its contents upon a large brass tray which he had placed upon a table. This done, he waved the electrician out of the room, struck a match and ignited the pile. As it blazed up, he murmured something about "consuming fires," "purifying flames"; and while he droned his incantation he stirred the blazing papers with a metal wand until the last one had been consumed, until the last charred and blackened remnant had been resolved to ashes. His voice became louder, more resonant as he announced:

"My friends, your hopes, your fears have passed on. Your words have been transmuted into a form visible to him who speaks through the Rajah's vase. May his counsel aid and cheer you in your quest for the ultimate truth. Not all of you will hear the Voice; fortunate will be those to whom it gives a message. Now, as many of you as can find seats please follow me into the Presence."

(Continued on page 156)

By ARTHUR
STRINGER



*A
Short Story
of a
Man
Who Hated Women*

The Bear Trap

Illustrations by Percy Cowen

She was the first white woman who had ever climbed Holgar's path.

HOLGAR watched the woman as she drove the bow of her canoe up on the pebbly bank. He watched her as she stepped ashore and stood studying the wreath of smoke that went up from his cabin chimney between the sheltering pines. He watched with a quickening pulse as she lifted a short barreled rifle from the canoe bottom and stood erect again, with the weapon in the crook of her arm. She seemed to be studying still again the smoke wreath that drifted up between the pine tops.

Holgar's heart sank as he saw her slowly advance up the narrow trail that led from the river bank to his cabin door. He was vaguely afraid of women, just as he vaguely hated them.

A small panic took possession of him as he stared out at her through the square window sash set in the neatly dovetailed log ends. He noticed, with the appraising quick eye of the woodsman, that she was dressed in a hunting coat of leather lined with lamb's wool, laced leather leggings and khaki knickerbockers fitting close at the knee, like riding breeches. She was a young woman, and she was slender, and she carried her head high. There was still a questioning look on her face as she advanced towards the shack. Holgar was too upset to nurse any definite impression as to the beauty of that face. But there was courage in her poise, courage tempered with caution, and the repeated impression of youthfulness which came from her as she stopped in his clean swept dooryard did not add to his happiness.

"Haloo-o-o-o!" she called out, with a cool note of challenge which the woodsman resented. This was the first white woman, he remembered, who had ever climbed that path of his.

"Haloo-o-o-o!" she challenged again. There was a trace of impatience in her call this time. But Holgar did not open his door until she had called for the third time.

He did not speak at first. There was, however, a small frown on her face as she studied him.

"You're a white man, aren't you?" she demanded, almost sharply, bewildered by the stolidity of his prolonged stare.

He ignored both her question and the ironic barb in it. "How'd you get here?" he asked. His voice was heavy, and a faint dewing of embarrassment moistened his weathered forehead.

The woman, taking her own turn at ignoring questions, scrutinized him with her level hazel eyes. She found it hard, apparently, to reconcile a clean shaven face with a manner so uncouth.

"I'm glad you're a white man," she finally acknowledged, with a sigh that was obviously forced. "I thought at first I was stumbling on an Indian or a mere breed."

Holgar netted through the full length of his sinewy body. "I'm a white man," he none too graciously admitted.

"Then you can help me," she proclaimed. "For I rather fancy I'm lost."

"Where'd you come from?" he asked, inadequately, resenting her smile as she leaned with a show of patience on her rifle.

"From Coppermine Camp on Barren Creek. A black bear raided our grub shack and I wanted to shoot him. I got lost following his trail."

"You were foolish to try to," was his curt comment.

"I realized that," she continued in an achieved quietness of tone. "I realized that when I came out on what must have been



The sight of his wife placidly stitching on a man's flannel shirt brought forth a gasp of anger from Wheelock.

another stream. I kept along that until I found a canoe and a cache of food up on a stage above high water. So I took it. I thought I was still on Barren Creek and that it would take me to Moose Crossing. But instead it took me into this river of yours and down some really awful rapids. And your chimney smoke was the first sign of life I've seen since yesterday morning."

Her smile as she stood watching him in the ensuing silence was both patient and cogitative. She endured his pointed inspection without flinching, apparently waiting for her appeal of body and face to produce some accustomed result. She was

obviously not unused to the homage of men. But she could see no unbending on the part of the hostile big figure in the doorway.

"Barren Creek's one hundred and thirty miles from here as the crow flies," said Holgar, with no loss of his earlier gruffness.

"I had a seven mile current to help me along," she said with a short laugh.

"And you'll have it against you going back," he announced, "if you go by Wapiti River."

Her face sobered. "Will you take me back?"

Her question had the crispness of an ultimatum. And Holgar's answer was correspondingly crisp.

"No!" he told her.

"Why not?" she demanded, after a moment in which to digest her shock.

The question seemed to go unheard. "Are you a married woman?" he suddenly asked her.

"Yes," she said, coloring under his continued stare.

"Where's your husband?"

Adrienne Wheelock laughed. It was not a mirthful laugh. But it seemed to keep Reason on her throne.

"At the present moment, I rather fancy he's in a very comfortable office on the fourteenth floor of the Husonia Building on lower Broadway. That, I might further explain, is in a city known as New York."

Holgar's face remained impassive. "You're a long way off from him," he finally remarked.

"Much to my regret," added the woman, with the color now gone from her face.

"And I take it you're a camper?" he continued, with his eyes on the river below him.

"You can call me that if you wish," she retorted. "But just at present I'm a white woman lost in the open. And seeing you were a white man, I naturally looked to you for help."

His smoldering eye swung back to her. "It's not that I don't want to help you," he said with an odd gesture of helplessness, "but I can't."

"Why not?" she demanded, noticing that the color had again deepened on his heavy face.

"I—I don't think I could make you understand," he said, shifting uneasily in the narrow doorway.

She turned away and stared at the intermittent silver of the winding and snake-like river. It was several moments before she was completely mistress of herself. She preferred that no betrayal of fear should escape her. When she spoke, accordingly, she did so in as matter-of-fact a tone as she could command.

"If I kept on down Wapiti River, where would it take me to?"

"Into three or four hundred miles of wilderness."

She turned at that speech, and once more stared into his unparticipating eyes. He was not unaware of the tragic intentness of that stare, nor was he oblivious of the contempt touched with hostility in which she was bathing him. He merely wiped his brow helplessly and waited for her to speak again.

But the woman did not speak again. Her face puckerred oddly, not unlike a hurt child's, as her eyes rested on his motionless figure. Then she turned quickly away. She did so to hide from him a sudden and humiliating gush of tears, tears of exasperation and defeat shot through with hate. And she knew there was no use turning back.

Holgar watched her as she walked away. He stared after her, outwardly impassive but inwardly depressed, conscious for the first time of the isolation of the brown-clad figure in the hard northern light. He noticed that instead of taking the path to the river she was stumbling half blindly along the narrow trail that led into the filtered green shadows of the pine woods. He was vaguely worried by her foolishness, for no woman, he knew, could travel overland through such a country. She'd find that out soon enough, after her first muskeg or two, and circle back to her canoe and the proper avenue for traffic in those unmapped northern forests. She carried a gun and there was game enough to keep even a greenhorn going. When the high water went down a little there'd be a Chippewan or two coming out with their furs. Or perhaps old Pecotte, the *metis* from Little Bear Creek, would happen along and pick her up.

Then Holgar looked after the vanishing

woman with a still deeper frown on his heavy face. He had suddenly remembered about his bear trap. That trap was set near the lip of the first muskeg over the wooded hill to the northeast. And the woman had taken the trail leading toward that trap. He had placed it carefully nearly a week before. There was not one chance in ten that a woman could pass over that innocent looking trail without springing the trap. And once those heavy steel jaws had snapped shut on a woman's leg—

Holgar swallowed hard. He made a small animal-like sound of anxiety as he lunged out of the door. But he no longer hesitated. He ran after the woman, winding down the uneven trail with singularly light movements of the moccasined feet, calling out to her, now and then, as he ran. But she neither looked back nor answered him. He shouted louder, more



Holgar carried her easily, but of the two his face was the more distorted.



"Why did you ever come here?" the woman asked.
"That's something I've never talked about," replied Holgar.

frenziedly, as she drew nearer the muskeg fringe. She must have heard him. But she ignored his calls.

He threw up his hands in an uncoordinated gesture of desperation as she strode forward into the dissembling narrow trail where the syrup was smeared on the saplings. His work had been well done—had been too well done. There was nothing to betray to the casual eye what lay immediately before her. He hoped forlornly that she might yet step aside into safety. But she surrendered to the deliberated deceit of the gradually narrowing brush channel he had made. Her abstracted eye sought out the line of least resistance. She went stubbornly forward, went forward into the small tideway where disaster lay crouched like a cougar to spring up at her.

Holgar knew he was too late. He shouted, without knowing he was shouting, at the sudden arrest of all movement in that slender body. At the same moment that he saw the small eruption of dust and leaves at her feet he noticed the odd backward movement of her torso, like that of a walker on ice seeking to recover a lost balance. He saw the rifle fall to the ground as she swayed there, with her arms grotesquely upflung. She did not scream out as he had expected. But after one more violent twist she fell forward on her face, where she floundered, floundered horribly, for a moment or two.

She lay quite still as he ran to her side, and he thought at first that she had fainted. But as he knelt, panting, and tugged at the iron jaws that bit into the leathered leg just below the knee, she opened her eyes and looked up at him. He noticed perplexity in them, and mute protest against pain which could not be accounted for. He kept saying "Oh, my God, my God!" over and over again, foolishly, as he strained and fought with the trap jaws.

"What is it?" he heard her ask weakly as he leaned back to regain his breath.

"It's a bear trap," he gasped, wincing as he gaped down at the

toothed steel that still bit into the flattened oval of the leather covered leg. "You stepped into a set bear trap. It's got you here by the knee."

"Can't you take it away?" she implored thinly as she lay clasping and unclasping her fingers.

"Yes, I'll get it," he said with a shake of his head. If he had a heavy enough pole, he knew, he could insert it in the trap and pry back the spring. But there was no pole at hand, and he had no ax. He stopped short as he saw her rifle.

"I'll get you out," he proclaimed. She moaned as he moved her body a little so that he could set the base of the trap against the clog pole. Then he took her rifle and held the barrel end within a foot of the tempered steel spring.

"What are you doing?" she called out in a voice flat with terror as her opening eyes saw him crouched close beside her with the balanced firearm.

"I'm going to break that spring with a bullet," he told her as he quickly studied his aim so that no ricochet of the ball might imperil her. "It'll hurt a little, the shock. But it'll get the trap loose."

He fired the next moment, and her sharp cry seemed an echo of the sound. The spring broke, as he expected, and he carefully lifted the relaxed iron jaws away. She moaned again as he turned her over on her back. The grayness of her face rather frightened him.

"Does your leg hurt?" he asked as he stood staring helplessly down at her.

"It's when you move me," she complained with her eyes closed.

He didn't altogether like the look of that leg. And he dreaded the thought of having to unlace the leather legging, of having to inspect bare flesh bruised and lacerated by one of his own traps.

"I guess I'll have to get you up to the house," he said after a full minute of silent self-conflict. She made no reply to that,

so he circled about until he found a bit of hollow tree'bole, which he split by striking against a pine trunk. Then he gathered moss and took the laces from his moccasins. With the moss he carefully padded the two curved bits of timber and tied them splint-wise along the helpless limb. She opened her eyes and met his gaze as he stooped over her, tying the last knot.

"I'll have to carry you," he said in a strained voice.

She said "All right," very feebly, and closed her eyes again.



He wiped his wet face with the sleeve of his flannel shirt. Then he took a deep breath and gathered her up in his arms.

He could carry her with no great effort, but of the two his face was the more distorted as he made his way up the narrow trail. A harried look came into his eyes as he edged in through the equally narrow cabin door with his burden. As he put her down on the bunk with the carefully spread gray blankets his face muscles were twitching spasmodically and a flat pallor had imposed itself upon the customary tan of his cheek.

He backed away from the bunk and slipped out through the open door, where he stood breathing in deep lungfuls of air, like a man taxed beyond his strength. He looked back at the shadowy cabin almost timorously as he heard the faint call of her voice. Then he drew himself together and stepped in through the door. The thing had to be faced, he knew, and it might as well be faced at once.

He crossed to the bunk, where the woman lay exactly as he had placed her.

"Could I have water?" she said quietly. "A drink of water?"

He brought her the water in his worn and battered tin dipper.

But before she could drink he had to slip a hand under her body and lift her head and shoulders up from the bunk pillow. She groaned as she sank back on the pillow. And Holgar's trouble returned to him.

"I'm afraid we'll have to look at that leg," he said with a resolute setting of the jaw. But again he had to wipe his forehead as he spoke.

"It won't do any good," she said with weak listlessness.

"But it's hurting you, isn't it?" he compelled himself to ask.

She was silent for a moment and then she said "Yes," very quietly.

"You can't tell what's wrong under there," he ventured with a vague gesture toward the splint-covered knee.

She moved and gasped a little. "It—it seems to get worse," she admitted. He could see that she was biting her slightly indrawn under lip. To ease the tension that was leaving his face a trifle haggard he turned resolutely to making a fire and putting a kettle of water on the russet small range. Then he rolled up his sleeves and washed his hands. His jaw was set again as he took down his hunting knife and felt its edge. Then, breathing deep, he crossed over to the bunk.

"I'll have to cut some of this stuff away," he said as casually as he could. She did not speak, but he accepted her slightly perceptible hand movement as a sign of assent. So he untied the moccasin strings and removed the improvised splints. With his knife he cut the lace of the brown leather legging and carefully drew the latter away. He next took off the heavy tan walking shoe. Noticing her wince as he tried to unbutton the leg end of the knickerbockers, he took his knife and slit the khaki material up well past the knee. Then he carefully turned back the top of the ribbed woolen stocking, working it down inch by inch over the limp-hanging foot. She moaned

once or twice, and he made his movements as slow and guarded as he could.

He was relieved, when the leg was bare, to find no blood there. He had stood foolishly in dread of blood. But he could see, a hand's breadth below the knee, where the flesh was dishearteningly swollen, discolored and darkened to almost a plum color in contrast to the whiteness of the skin below and above it.

He bent over it, breathing heavily as he explored the inflamed surface, explored it with cruelly inquisitive fingers until she once more cried out with the pain of it.

"This leg's broken," he said in a husky voice.

The only response from the woman was a repeated small movement of hopelessness. He continued to kneel there beside her for what seemed a very long time, with a look of hopelessness in his eyes. Then with a sound in his throat that was not definite speech he arose to his feet. He wrung out a towel made of hemmed bagging and placed it as a compress over the swollen flesh. Then with ax and knife he cut two splints of red cedar, shaping and hollowing out the soft wood until it conformed to the inert white limb which he could now study with less stricken

eyes. For these splints he cut a lining of deerskin padded with an end torn from his Hudson Bay blanket. Then he filled his tin basin and lifted away the compress and gently bathed the helpless leg. It wasn't until she asked for water again that he spoke to her.

"This is going to hurt a little," he told her as he bent over.

"What are you doing to me?" she asked with her face to the wall.

"We've got to reduce that fracture," he explained.

"What's the use?" she half whispered, indifferently.

"It's got to be done," he told her, almost gruffly. And with that fortifying mood of gruffness still on him, he bent to the business at hand. He could see her fingers open and close and he could hear her vague sounds of distress. Then she screamed, sudden and shrill, as his thumbs closed on the swollen flesh and compelled the ragged bone ends into place. After that there was neither sound nor movement from her, and he concluded that she must have fainted.

But he kept grimly on at his task, padding the splints and adjusting them and lacing them firmly into place with long strips of buckskin. When he had finished, he took off her other legging and shoe and stocking. To get away the heavy leather coat, which gave him more difficulty, he finally had to rip open one shoulder seam from collar to sleeve, and then cut the stitching in the sleeve itself.

When he had decently covered her with one of his worn gray blankets, and mopped his own face dry, he got fresh water and sprinkled her forehead. She opened her eyes, studied him frowningly and then turned away her head. He concluded, after watching her for several minutes, that she had fallen asleep.

So he busied himself with the tasks still confronting him. He went for the broken bear trap and the rifle, standing the latter in the shack corner near the bunk head. He prepared a broth of doe meat and barley, in case his patient should want to eat later in the day. He washed and sun-dried two half-blankets and the least threadbare of his flannel shirts. Then he took his ax and cut timber for a shallow lean-to across his shack door. He roofed it with bark and fitted it with a movable couch of poplar poles mattress with pine branches. This he intended for his sleeping quarters. For the woman, he knew, would be with him for many days . . .

When Holgar went to the bunk towards evening he found the woman awake but feverish. He offered her broth, which she refused. So he made her tea, the one panacea of the northern woodsman. She drank some of it, but her discomfort was more obvious than ever.

"Does your leg feel worse?" he asked, fighting against a vague spirit of helplessness which weighed him down.

"No," she said, with her face averted. "It's these clothes."

"I thought they'd be uncomfortable," he said in his expressionless flat voice. He went out, after a full minute of awkward silence, and brought back with him the fresh washed flannel shirt and blankets. He held them so that she could see them, but he did not speak. She studied them with opaque eyes, a line of pathos deepening about her lips, slightly puckered with pain and revolt. She studied them for several minutes. Then she slowly nodded her head.

He reached for the hunting knife. "I'm afraid I'll have to cut off most of those things," he said.

She closed her eyes as she said "All right," very feebly. So he knelt beside the bunk and began to cut away her clothing. He tried to do it carefully, but an indeterminate torpor of the brain seemed to leave him more thick fingered than he usually was.

When he had finished, he covered those different articles of apparel, still warm from the heat of her body, with a square of his precious bagging. He covered them and bundled them up and put them out of sight, as though they were something on which the eye ought not to rest. Then he went out in the open air and walked about with no sense of goal or direction, like a man confronted with problems that offered small promise of solution.

When he went back to the cabin, shadowed with the weariness of a fighter who had been through battle, he was only dully disturbed by her unexpected request that her rifle be placed in the bunk beside her. He did as she asked without speaking.

II

JOHN HOLGAR, stretched out on his creaking pole bed placed guardedly across the cabin door, slept even less soundly that night than did the feverish woman on the bunk inside. Twice

he muttered aloud out of his troubled dreams and once he found himself pacing, half asleep but sentinel-like, up and down the clearing in front of his cabin. Three times in all he got up and went to Adrienne Wheelock's side when she called to him. He was clumsy at helping her. But he stood thinly grateful for the semi-darkness that hung its relieving curtains about those ministrations, just as he found a shadow of solace in the depersonalizing veils of pain that still immersed, like a fog, the woman on the bunk.

For he was compelled to see, both that night and during the days that followed, the last wall of personal reservation laid low between them. That, he reminded himself, was something imposed upon them by destiny, was something they could not escape. The woman seemed the first to reach some final and forlorn citadel of composure, facing an unexpected situation as one faces unexpected surgery. She lapsed into a protective indifference.

When her fever abated and she could eat again she even emerged into a phantasmal sense of fortitude touched with superiority as she lay sleepily conscious of those solemn ministrations of his. She was much the more comfortable of the two. She watched him as he carried in stovewood from the neat pile along the cabin's side wall and brought fresh water from his upland spring. She watched him as he cooked and washed and swept the cabin with his broom of shaved hickory. There was even a momentary threat of laughter in her eyes when, on the first day that she could be propped up in her bunk, he carried over to her his ludicrous tin basin half filled with warm water, a small piece of hard soap, and a washcloth made from a sun-bleached square of burlap. She felt wordlessly grateful to him for his reticence as he took his ax from the corner and went off to the woods.

Adrienne Wheelock, in fact, was slowly compelled to revise her estimate of Holgar. She was amazed at his gentleness when he finally took off the splints to make sure that the bone had properly knitted, just as she lay perversely fortified by the showing of something almost akin to terror on his face as his unsteady fingers unlaced the straps of buckskin. But she was very grateful for his husky assurance that everything seemed to be going well and that her leg was as straight as a bow string. Neither of them quite knew, however, just how long splints should be kept over such a hurt. So rather than assume any risks he made a fresh and softer padding of rabbit skin and laced the grooved cedar slabs once more about her knee. She sighed with relief when she was able to lie down again. She was indeterminately sorry, as bad happened more than once of late, when he took his trolling line and went off to the river.

When he came back two hours later she watched him with a less indolent eye. Life, with returning strength, was becoming to her less and less a thing of the casual moment. She let her gaze meet Holgar's as he bent over the bunk to see if she were awake or sleeping.

"How long do you suppose I'll have to be here?" she asked him, as casually as she could.

He pondered that question with a frown on his shy and solemn face. "That all depends on you," he finally asserted.

"I ought to be taken back," she ventured, conscious that life had once more become a thing of enormous complications. But she watched him covertly as she spoke.

He moved his head up and down, gloomily.

"I'd rather not take you back until you're able to walk," he told her. Then he added, apparently abashed by her intent stare: "It'll be pretty tough going."

She lay thinking this over. "When can I walk?" she asked out of the silence.

"That all depends on you," he repeated. "I don't think a thing like that ought to be hurried."

"I suppose they think I'm dead," she said as she stared up at the shack roof.

"There was no way of letting them know," he asserted. She wondered why his color deepened a trifle.

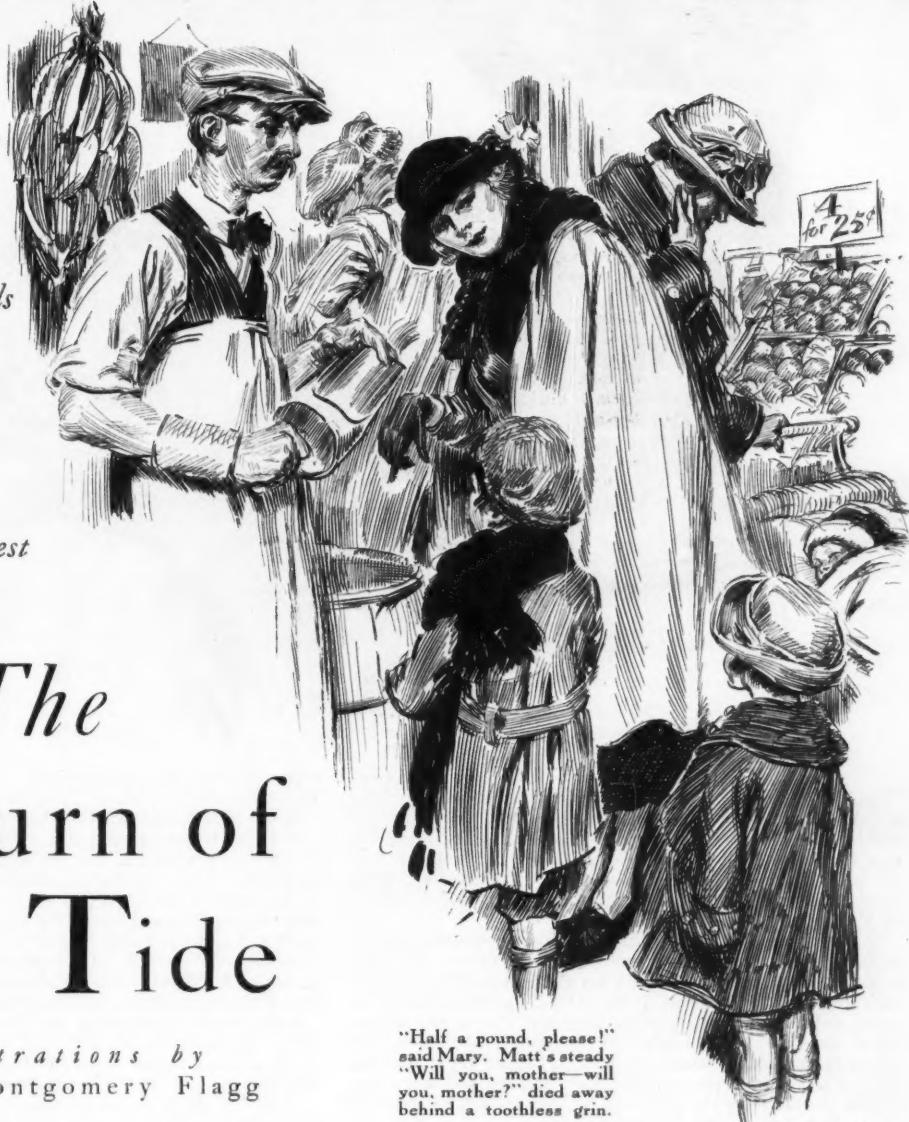
"I know," she quietly agreed. "But I hate to think of—all the work and worry I've caused you."

"I'd certain things to pay up for," he said, almost roughly, as he busied himself at building a fire in the small russet stove.

She watched him as he brought in a pail of black bass. She saw him take one of the fish and with the end of his knife cut through the skin from the throat up to the shoulder, just behind the bony ridge that lies back of the gills. Then he ran his knife point along the top, on each side of the big back fin, from the neck to the tail. Then about two-thirds of the way down the fish's body he made two lateral cuts, (Continued on page 151)

By KATHLEEN NORRIS

*The Last
of the
Ma Callahan
Stories and, adds
Mrs. Norris's
Husband—who
is also a
Distinguished
Writer—the finest*



JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

The Return of the Tide

*Illustrations by
James Montgomery Flagg*

ANNIE CALLAHAN CURLEY, bumping her young son Matt ahead of her with a guiding knee, clutching her four-year-old Helen firmly by a pulpy hand, pushing the perambulator that contained—along with the bread and the canned corn and the graham flour—the plump body of Frank Curley, seventeen months old, and managing, at one and the same time, to grip with firm, thin, worn fingers her flat pocketbook, encountered in Haley's Market none other than her sister, Mary Callahan Keane, a bride of four months.

It was a sweet, sharp, sunshiny morning in November; the little Curleys were well wrapped, and the tips of their microscopic noses were wet and red. Annie wore her thick old coat, and pretty, dainty Mary the smart homespun cape with the fur collar that had been a part of her trousseau. The market was full of glancing sunlight and clean color; the cash registers rang and clattered, and clerks dashed about busily.

Mary and Annie smiled in simple pleasure as they met. Mary's first little dainty housekeeping rooms were but three blocks from Annie's overrun little household, after all, and they saw each other almost daily. But it was pleasant to meet here, as Mary immediately said, grown-up, you know, and married, and buying things for their husbands to eat.

Mary plunged Helen unceremoniously into the foot of Baby Frank's coach with the freedom of familiar aunts, and Helen

"Half a pound, please!"
said Mary. Matt's steady
"Will you, mother—will
you, mother?" died away
behind a toothless grin.

squirmed herself somehow into comparative comfort upon the packages and cans.

"Hush up, Matt!" said Mary then, without heat, to the seven year old boy. "Here, what do you want, for the love of Pete!" she added to the child, as she opened her pretty, well filled purse. "Half a pound, please," she said imperiously to the salesman, indicating a great opened hogshead of mixed sweet crackers beside her.

Matt's steady "Will you, mother—will you, mother—will you, mother?" died away into silence behind a toothless grin as he began the attack with a pink-coated cocoanut confection, and Annie, after a perfunctory murmur of "What do you say, love?" settled herself happily, half supported against the counter, for a chat with Mary.

"Did you see ma today, Mary?" she began.

"I was just in there. She wanted me to send her some pork, for beans," Mary said, instantly portentous. "I think she looks terrible!" she added solemnly, blinking her suddenly misted eyes.

Annie's glance at once became grave, and she sighed.

"I think she looks terrible!" she said drearily. "Frank thinks she looks something terrible," she went on thoughtfully. "She's getting awful—old," she said, faintly stressing the last word to express something for which her vocabulary was inadequate.

"She's terribly lonely, maybe," Mary suggested, troubled and perplexed.



"Well, she has Marty," Annie answered in the same tone. "Don't give him the frosted ones," she added to Matt, wiping a pink smear from Frank's soft, shapeless mouth. "Give him that graham one. Take sister over there to those boxes, Matt, the way the baby won't see you eating them. I thought maybe I'd stop there—at ma's I mean—with the children, going home, and give them their lunch there," she finished mildly to Mary.

Now Mary, and her brother Jim's wife, Ida, in recent conference concerning ma's welfare, had decided that Annie was too easily inclined to walk in upon ma with her children and impose upon ma's hospitality for luncheon. It meant building a fire in the kitchen stove, and it meant an exhausting amount of cutting and buttering of bread and tying of bibs and wiping of little mouths. Of course ma adored it—there was that to be said for it; but ma was not so young as she once had been, and Ida and Mary, one a bride and the other the mother of but one small child, were apt to be a little hard in their judgment of Annie.

But Mary was haunted this morning by the thought of ma as she had just left her, moping solitary and quiet about the clean empty kitchen, and it occurred to her, brisk and radiant herself in bridal garments, and in the sweet winter sunshine, that Annie's tribe today might do actual good by luching with "Gogga." Mary herself had her marketing to do, and then she and another young wife, a neighbor, were going into the big city to see a "fillum." The entertainment and shopping would consume four happy hours; the young women would wander giggling and with linked arms through the greatest shopping district of the whole world: up Sixth Avenue, across Thirty-fourth Street. They would debate at windows, follow passing costumes with critical eyes, discuss bobbed hair and the length of skirts. And they would reach home wearied and sated with the sheer joy and thrill of living, just in time to serve bridal dinners of chops, Saratoga potatoes and cream puffs from the bakery, to the enslaved Billy and Dan.

It was many years since Annie Curley had been free for any such idle, aimless enjoyment. And Mary, suddenly smitten by the thought, and of the chains that these three small, exacting children must be, and perhaps half consciously touched by the paleness and plainness of Annie's face, stamped already with the first shadow of a new responsibility, said affectionately:

"Do go in, Ann! Ma gets so lonely lately. I—I wish I could. But I sorta promised Loretta——"

"Oh, go on with Loretta while you can!" Annie said heartily,

with a smile on her motherly face. "It won't be forever. How do you feel anyway, Mary?" she asked shrewdly.

Mary flushed and laughed, half resentful and half amused.

"Oh, for Heaven's sake, Annie! You and Ida are cautions. Every time you look at me you're sizing me up," she said impatiently. "This morning ma was having her coffee when I went in, and when I said I didn't want any—for I was just from my own breakfast—you'd die at the look she gave me. 'Does the smell of it make you sick, Mary?' she says. 'No, ma,' I says in a regular yell, 'I love it. The smell of coffee is a regular perfume to me. I'll tell you when there's any news,' I says, 'and until then I wish to goodness you and Annie would lay off me!'"

Annie laughed indulgently and deprecatingly as the trim and pretty Mary vigorously delivered her protest, with her pink cheeks growing pinker under her snug veil, and her square slim shoulders erect under the brown cape.

"I know," she said apologetically. "But there's no happiness like it, Mary," she reminded her sister as she settled Frank, made Helen comfortable and prepared to go upon her way.

"So I see," Mary said significantly and satirically. Annie only laughed again. She would not have given up one kiss on the damp back of young Frank's neck for all the shopping, for all the shows, in Christendom.

"But say, lissen, Annie," Mary said suddenly, just as they were about to part. This was the customary proceeding; they would now exchange, after their first farewells, the real news of the day, if news there were. "Lissen, Annie," said Mary. "Dan and I were talking about Christmas this morning. What are you and Frank planning to do?"

"I wish we could have you all, and Josie and John too," Annie said wistfully. "But I don't know how I could manage it——"

"You'd be crazy to try it!" Mary assured her heartily. "And I suppose poor Ida won't have a family dinner," she said thoughtfully. Ida, their brother's wife, had lost a little son not much more than year ago, a tragedy that had plunged all the different branches of the family into bitter sorrow.

The Jim Callahans had Cecelia left, to be sure, and a lovely little girl she was. But for Jimmy, the adored one brother of the family, to lose his splendid little Francis—Francis, who was so precocious and so handsome and so generally adored—was a frightful blow to them all. Francis's mother had been rendered almost melancholy, and Ma Callahan had suddenly seemed to collapse into age and grief. For months the women of the family



JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

Brisk, capable, resourceful, Ma Callahan stepped from her kitchen with the old, erect step of long ago and assumed control of everything.

brooded upon all the horrors of the child's last hours, upon the funeral and the days preceding the funeral, when he lay so quiet and so beautiful in his white serge first Communion suit, looking, with his dropped long black lashes upon his rosy, handsome little face, like an angel already.

The months had brought some little comfort to Ida; she knew now that St. Valentine's Day would find another baby in her arms. She would go to Annie's cluttered, crowded flat and sit for hours with Annie's fat, healthy baby in her lap, and although down Ida's cheeks would pour the quiet tears that four year old Cecelia wiped away again and again, yet she grew quieter and the very weeping seemed to relieve her.

And then, in August, there was Mary's wedding, and all the excitement attendant upon the establishment of one more little home in the world, and Josie and John Concannon had come down from Albany, with their four year old Rose Agnes in her white coat with the beaver collar, and there had been much felicity and innocent mirth between them all.

But Jim Callahan never for an instant forgot his boy, and there was a certain new and weary droop to his big shoulders, and a pathetic, seeking look in his eyes in these days; and Ma Callahan grieved so for her grandson that her daughters sometimes told each other fearfully that "it'd be the death of her yet."

She liked best to sit in her kitchen, that clean and empty and quiet kitchen that had been the theater for so many young tragedies and comedies, so much eager young living, and talk of the past and especially of little Francis, with Annie or Kate Oliver or some other member of the family. If chance supplied a fresh listener, some quiet little neighborhood mother with awed eyes and with a baby tugging at her breast, then Mrs. Callahan would review the whole terrible thing from the beginning to end.

If only she had spoken to Ida when she did be noticing that little Frank looked as pale as a curd! she would lament. That was "the Tuesday," mind you, and they didn't have the doctor to him until "the Thursday" night. The hands on him was as cold as ice, but then he'd been out with all the Sodality boys, and sure she thought it was no more than that he was tired.

"Well, then, and on the Wednesday morning," the tale ran, "he stepped in on his way to school. And he had a great way with him, that he'd be getting out of you what he wanted, mind you, and him as grave as a bishop! 'Gogga,' he says, holding up the little bold face of him the way I could kiss him, and me hands in the dough—"

And Mrs. Callahan's tears would begin to fall fast, remembering the beaming little face that was so soon to vanish from among the other beloved faces. Annie and Mary came to dread those recitals.

Christmas had been terrible, and now there was another Christmas upon them, and it bemoaned Mary, the bride, and Ida, for the sake of her unborn child, and Annie, always a tower of strength and help, to make it as easy as possible, perhaps even happy, for ma and Jim. The Concannons might come down, and they would all be together; anyway, they must brace up, the sisters decided, and make the best of the situation.

"Ma's simply not fit to have all the excitement and fuss," Annie offered dubiously. "And Ida expecting, you couldn't ask it of her, it'd kill her!"

"No, but this is what I was thinking," Mary said. "Ida and Jim have got a spare room, and we have, too. Now if Josie and John came down to them, quietly, you know, and not exciting ma in the least, and then if I took Rose Agnes at our house—Dan'd love it, he's cracked about kids anyway—and then if we got a frozen pudding made at the Tea Shop—they're perfectly delicious—"

"Say, Mary, I think that would be wonderful!" Annie said radiantly. "I'll tell you what I can do. Frank's sure to win one of those twenty pound turkeys in the raffle at the club, he always does, and the Cottle works always give their married employees turkeys anyway, and I'll roast the two turkeys and bring them right over—Frank'll manage that! We won't say one word to ma—"

"Ida'll make the cram'bry," Mary added. "And vegetables are nothing—the canned ones are just as good if you leave them in a colander for two hours or more—"

"Well, hear the old housekeeper!" Annie laughed in fond pride. Mary flushed happily and consciously.

"Well, they are!" she said. "We could have a soup—the bean soup and the tomato mixed is simply grand. Loretta had it the other night—it was grand, *really!* And then the turkeys and fixings, and then dessert—that's oceans. I'll tell you what we'll do—we won't say one word to ma until Christmas Day itself; you ask her to your house and say it's going to be just your own family. And then, about eleven, we'll all walk in on he—"

"I'll give the children a late breakfast—or maybe Kate would keep them for me until about one," Annie interrupted enthusiastically. "Because we don't want any noise or racket. And then we'll clean them all up, and we'll all go, Ida and Cecelia and Jim,

The Return of the Tide

and John and Josie with Rose Agnes, and Frank and me with our three, and you and Dan. That'll be—that'll be twelve—thirteen, with ma. We can't sit down thirteen—"

She paused, and Mary frowned thoughtfully.

"Marty!" she remembered suddenly. The small derelict that Mrs. Callahan had adopted years before had been visiting Josie in Albany and had been delayed for weeks instead of the originally intended days, by measles. "He and Rose Agnes will be all over the measles by then," Mary announced in satisfaction, "and Josie will bring him down. Ma's always happier when she has Marty anyway. And she has lots of china, and scads of napkins—you and I'll just put her in a chair and keep everything serene, and Ida and Josie can heat things up, and then all the children will come in! And afterwards we'll just let her talk to Jim quietly, and we'll clean up every last spoon and send the children home and have a real good visit with her alone."

Annie was so excited and so pleased by this plan, and Mary so inspired to perfect it by fresh details, that but for the enraged impatience of young Matthew Curley to get home, and the sudden whimpering of little Frankie for his noontide baked potato and top milk, the sisters might easily have spent another hour or two hours in rapturous communion.

Of this loving little maneuver to give Ma Callahan all the joy of a Christmas reunion without the nervous anxiety and effort of arranging it, Frank, Dan and Jim approved, each in his separate individual way. Dan exultantly kissed his wife and said that he'd bet it was all her idea, and that she was a wonder.

Frank, with whom affairs at the Iron Works were not going

well, and who was still worried about the bills from Annie's last illness, also kissed his wife, more soberly, and gave her the proud and tender smile she loved, and told her that nothing but blessings could follow a daughter that was as good as she was. And mind you, if he didn't win a turkey this year—but all the fellows thought he had the luck of the Old Boy himself about it!—she was to buy a big turkey and pay for it. The children were all well, God bless them, and the only thing now was that eighty-two to Doc Webster, and they'd squeeze that out very easy without scrimping on the Christmas turkey, said Frank.

Annie's whole soul went out to him in a wave of love and gratitude. They had just been bringing themselves to face, in the last few days, the probability of the coming of a fifth child. Annie had lost one baby before birth, but there were three hungry, dirty, wet, exacting, restless, wakeful little Curleys in the six room apartment now, and Frank had money worries, and the cost of everything necessary to safe and comfortable living was what he called "crool." Only he and Annie knew what it all meant; the utter madness of fatigue and worry and work, the mountain of tiny cares that crushed all the sweetness out of living for a while. Sleepless nights, stumbling errands about the darkened rooms in the chill of midnight, sour bottles, washtubs piled high with dirty, worn, buttonless little garments, and always the whining, crying, fretful little voices—Annie knew every detail of it. And yet she had said to Frank two or three nights ago, "Let's let the first thing we say of him be 'God bless him!' Frank." And she kissed her husband now, when his patient goodness could go on beyond her and the children and extend to ma, with a rush of love and confidence that no hardship and struggle could do anything but deepen.

"Easier than poor Ida, Frank!" she said, thinking of Francis's little grave piled with a second winter's snows. And Frank, drawing his own splendid boy toward him, reverently nodded.

Jim approved the Christmas plan with his new, sad, quiet smile. If Ida could stand it, he said questioningly. Ida, tears rushing to her eyes, said bravely yes, that she would like it, and that Cecelia would love being with Gogga and all the children. She got into Jim's lap, and Cecelia, the exquisite and blue-eyed four year old, with a flyaway mop of pure gold hair, clambered in too, and they all clung together.

"You won't mind it, Jim?" Ida pleaded, remembering last Christmas, when she and ma and Jim had all battled through a bitter snowstorm to the new little grave in the Flushing cemetery,

and that ma had had a chill after it, and that Annie and her young baby had come over to ma's, and how they all had gotten to crying in the Christmas evening.

"No, my darling," he answered gravely, with a deep, patient sigh.

"It isn't like a regular family Christmas," Ida said, "because we really have to think of your mother, Jim, and save her now. It's all going to be managed very quietly, with no strain and no confusion, and she'll not have any of the trouble or fuss at all. And next Christmas, Jim dear," she went on timidly, "next Christmas *will* be happier, won't it, Jim? You will feel happier, won't you, especially if it's a little boy that God sends us?"

"I think maybe another girl would be better—I don't know, it seems like a boy would put him out of his place," Jim said, thickly but steadily. "I guess we'd love the little feller—but he wouldn't be my Frank. Two years since we gave him his coaster—"

And he got up slowly, placing her and Cecelia gently in the chair he left, and went heavily into the kitchen, like an old man, and she heard the outer door shut. Ida, burying her wet face in Cecelia's mop, wept her heart out. If only—if only—there didn't ever have to be a Christmas again!



"A big, strong feller like you," Jim's mother began witheringly, "stravaging the streets on Christmas day, like a Turk."

JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

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Stories That Have Made Me Laugh

SOME of the members of the Bohemian Club of San Francisco went on a hunting trip in the Oregon Mountains and carried no cook with the outfit. Every second day they played a round of poker hands face up, and the member of the party with the lowest hand was designated as cook for the next two days, with the proviso, however, that if any other member of the camp during that period complained about the cooking, the cook should be relieved of his job and the kicker made to perform it for him.

The first person to be stuck with the cooking was a prominent San Francisco attorney. He had never so much as boiled a potato before, and the meal which he turned out for his fellow campers on their first night in camp was so unutterably bad that hardly anybody could touch it.

"This is the damndest stuff I ever ate," one of the victims said in an absent moment. And then he remembered the penalty.

"But I like it," he added hastily and emphatically.



They are all well stocked with the usual Scotch and rye, and while the bulk of the tourist trade is confined to these two staples, some of the more venturesome have recourse to an odd shaped bottle containing a colorless liquid. It is called *Tequila* and four glasses of it will induce all the symptoms of cerebrospinal meningitis complicated with leprosy.

A friend of mine took just one small pony of it the other day. "How was it?" I asked.

"It was like a torchlight procession going down your throat," he replied, "broken up by the police with nightsticks."

YOU will remember that many years ago Weber and Fields defined an optimist as a doctor who cures the eyes and a pessimist as a doctor who cures the feet. Since then, there have been many concrete examples of the term *pessimist*.

"A pessimist," said Professor Brander Matthews, "is a person who of two evils chooses both."

General Joseph Pendleton of the U. S. Marines said the other evening that his idea of a pessimist was a man who wore suspenders with a belt. Mr. Charles Holzwasser, a San Diego dry goods merchant, was present and he remarked that out of his experience, the best definition of a pessimist was a man who had once done business with an optimist.

All this leads up to the Scot's story of the pessimistic Sunday school scholar who was plucked in his examinations for his first

communion. The minister had asked him how many commandments there were and he had replied that there were perhaps a hundred. After he had left the room he was accosted by a fellow candidate.

"How did you make out?" he was asked.

"Lad," he replied, "ye'll never get through."

"Why not?" his friend asked.

"Well, for instance, if he asks ye how many commandments there are, what will ye say?" he inquired.

"Why, I'll say ten, of course," the friend replied.

"Ten!" he exclaimed. "Try him with ten, will ye? Why, I tried him with a hundred and he wasn't satisfied."

THE late John M. Scribner, a prominent member of the New York bar, was as bald as a bat and then some. He was speaking to Mr. Joseph H. Choate about the approaching marriage of one of the Vanderbilts to a foreign nobleman.

"It would be absurd to give a Vanderbilt a costly gift," he said. "I should like to find something not intrinsically valuable, but interesting because it is rare."

"Nothing easier, John," Mr. Choate said. "Just send her a lock of your hair."

FROM where I am writing this, the Mexican town of Tia Juana is twelve miles by a good concrete road. There are no formalities at the border, and across it the Volstead Act loses its entire force and effect. Every evening there is a steady stream of automobiles from the City of San Diego, and once past the Mexican Custom House the thirsty tourist hastens to the nearest bar. They

DURING the Siege of Paris in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, food became so scarce that any creature which walked upon four feet was sooner or later made into a ragout. Most of us can remember the story about the concierge and his wife who being too poor to buy a slice of elephant or a sirloin steak of some passé Old Dobbin, were reduced to making a meal of Fido, their Pomeranian terrier. His grief-stricken mistress served him up with a sauce *pourade*, and when at last she watered her empty plate with her tears, nothing remained of the faithful hound but his inarticulated skeleton.

"Poor Fido!" she sobbed. "How he would have enjoyed these bones."

And this brings us to the modern, up-to-date version of the same story. It was told me by Peewit, the celebrated French clown, who is now a neighbor of mine in California.

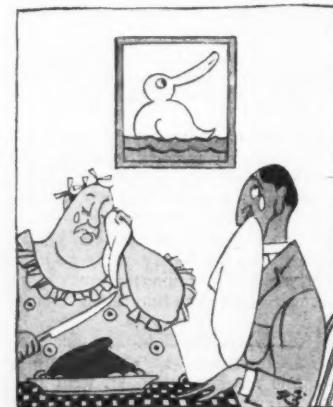
A vaudeville team had an act of trained ducks, with which they toured the vaudeville circuit for a number of years. Last sea-

son proved rather disastrous for them and they were laid off for several weeks. At length they received a telegram from a vaudeville agent in New York reading as follows:

SELVINIS TRAINED DUCKS ROCKVILLE CENTRE L I HAVE ENGAGEMENT TO OPEN NEW HAVEN NEXT WEEK

He received the following wire in reply:

IMPOSSIBLE TO ACCEPT HAVE EATEN THE ACT



By MONTAGUE GLASS

Illustrations by REA IRVIN

AN ITINERANT evangelist was making his way through the Cajon Pass in the days before Prohibition when he came to a settlement called Dos Robles. It consisted of a saloon and one adobe cabin, both belonging to a character known as Mojave Joe Green.

Mojave Joe was married to a Mexican woman and kept a few goats for what he was pleased to tell his patrons was his domestic supply of milk. None of it ever found its way, however, into coffee or tea. He used it with a little sugar, a little grated lemon peel and four fingers of Santa Cruz rum.

On the day when the evangelist passed that way, Joe had just mixed himself a large glass of his domestic supply and it reposed on the bar untasted as the evangelist entered.

"Friend," the evangelist said, "I'm on my way to San Bernardino. I'm tired and thirsty and I'll pay you a short bit for that there glass of milk yonder."

"Parson," Mojave Joe said, "any member of the Bible trade can't pay no short bit for a glass of milk in this shebeen. Drink it and welcome."

The evangelist thanked Joe and immediately drank the milk. He swallowed it slowly but continuously, and it was almost a minute before he banged the empty glass down on the bar. He wiped his mouth with the cuff of his dusty sleeve.

"Lord! What a cow!" he exclaimed fervently.

THIS Calcutta manager of an American electrical supply company gave his Baboo cashier a raise in salary and the following day received from him a letter in which among other things the Baboo wrote:

You have been a good samarian in presenting me the rise two rupees eight annas per week and for this kindness may Almighty God give you tit for tat.

MY FRIEND Peter B. Kyne has been, in addition to a talented author, a good soldier and served with distinction through two Filipino campaigns as well as the World War, in which he was a captain of field artillery. He says that when he was at Camp Kearney an old regular army captain discovered a newly drafted private in a pup tent wearing a pink silk bathrobe. The outraged officer immediately ordered the offending bathrobe to be destroyed and told its wearer just what he thought of him in language selected from a vocabulary which was particularly rich in terms appropriate to such an occasion—even for an old regular army captain's vocabulary.

The following day the old captain encountered the same private doing sentry duty and was further outraged by not receiving the customary salute.

"Hey, you blank, blank, blankety blank!" the captain roared. "What d'ye mean by not saluting your captain?"

The recruit smiled bashfully.

"Why, captain," he said, "I didn't salute you because I thought you were still mad at me."



DANIEL D. DOUGHERTY was the proprietor of a hardware store in a Middle Western town, and had worked up a good business in spite of the fact that he wasn't much of a hand with a pen.

Whenever he signed a check, he was obliged to take off his coat so as to give his arms scope for tackling the three flourishing capital D's.

Nevertheless, although he had the utmost difficulty not only in writing letters but in reading them himself after he had written them, he was quite sensitive about his lack of education. He believed that people professed out of sheer perversity not to be able to make out his written orders, and hence the following story about a salesman for a wholesale hardware house of which Mr. Dougherty was an old and valued customer.

The salesman had called around the first of the month as usual, prepared to book Mr. Dougherty's order, but Mr. Dougherty told him that because of a luncheon engagement he had written down the items of his order to save his own and the salesman's time, and handed the salesman a sheet of paper which contained hieroglyphics as cryptic as any on the Egyptian obelisk in Central Park.

The salesman thanked him profusely and went immediately to the hotel, where for the rest of the forenoon he tried in vain to decipher Mr. Dougherty's handwriting. At last he gave it up and went downstairs to the clerk.

"You hotel clerks have to read all kinds of writing," he said. "Be a good fellow and translate this for me." He handed the clerk the cryptic scrawl.

The clerk puzzled over it for more than half an hour and at last gave it up.

"You've got me," he confessed finally, "but there's one man in this town who can read anything that was ever written by anybody."

The salesman looked relieved.

"Who's that?" he asked.

"He's Jake Gessner, the prescription man at the Remington Drug Store," the clerk said. "Take it over to him and he'll fix you up."

A few minutes later the salesman entered the drug store and handed Mr. Dougherty's order for hardware to Jake the prescription clerk.

"Can you make this out?" he asked.

"Why sure I can," Jake announced. "Give me just five minutes, that's all."

"Go to it," the salesman said, and Jake disappeared behind the prescription counter.

Five minutes afterward, he returned with an eight-ounce bottle in his hand.

It was corked and labeled and contained a dark brown fluid. He handed it to the salesman.

"That'll be one seventy-five," Jake said.



The Barber of Seville, Ill.

(Continued from page 39)

"There's a *proper* dumbbell!" says Nero to me in disgust. "I bet this bird thinks New Jersey is a sweater!"

Once again I got to prevent violence and to change the subject I file a inquiry about Nero's girl.

"If you think the young woman would object to you bein' a honest, respectable prizefighter," I says, "what does she say about you bein' a barber?"

A broad grin spreads itself across Nero's weird face, and if he ain't somethin' to frighten the kiddies I built Uncle Tom's cabin!

"She don't know I'm a barber," he says. "I told her I was in the movies."

"With that pan?" howls Riley, pointin' to Nero's face.

"I didn't say I was a star," explains Nero. "I says I was what they call a double. A daredevil which takes the place of the stars when they is stunts to be done like jumpin' off bridges, layin' in front of trains, fallin' out of areyoplanes and that kind of stuff."

"D'y'e mean to tell me that every time you and this Jane sees a movie where somebody does a thriller, you tell her it ain't the hero doin' it at all, it's *you*?" says Riley in amazement.

"Sure!" nods Nero. "She don't know the difference."

"Then if she don't know the difference, why don't you tell her you're President Harding and make her think you *mean* somethin'?" says Riley.

Nero walks out on us.

But once I set my mind on a thing I'm two bulldogs when it comes to lettin' go. I had set my mind on makin' Nero a payin' proposition as a box fighter and I wasn't goin' to give him up without a struggle. I figure my next imitation will be to bear down on him through his girl. If I can show *her* the doubloons and fame they'll be in it for him if he turns leather pusher, I feel sure she'll give him his orders.

So whenever I see Nero I keep questionin' him about his lady love. It ain't hard to get him to talk about her, but it's hard to get him to stop. Her name is Colleen Rabinowitz and accordin' to Nero she's a disturbance of the first water. As beautiful as a kindly act, as clever as a Irishman's alibi, with more personal magnetism than magnet itself and packin' a voice which would make these opera singers sound like hucksters. She sings in a movie theater, Nero tells me, but what he don't tell me is how in the name of Kansas City a knockout such as he describes Colleen Rabinowitz to be ever come to fall for a male with this baby-frightenin' face of his. Still, stranger things has happened, as the gamester in the sanitum remarks while watchin' the little pink camels flyin' gaily around the room.

Anyhow, I frame up a little theater party with the idea of meetin' Nero's charmer and findin' out what she thinks of her homely boy friend settin' sail for a title. I declare my bewitchin' bride in on matters, because she seems to get a lot

of laughs out of these cave men of mine and what I have told her about Nero has made her hungry for more. So I get tickets for one of the Broadway frolics and tell Nero to bring along his young lady. So's to have things smack of a all-star cast, I also invite Rough House Riley and his Platonic friend, Venus D. Milo, of the Winter Garden. There's a party of six which would get attention anywhere!

Well, although the world's champion middleweight, his widely known manager, two of the most beautiful girls which ever plucked a eyebrow, and the Barber of Seville is members of this junket, the interest is in a person which ain't even there when we assemble for the night's pleasure. That's Colleen Rabinowitz, Nero's ace in the hole. Her failure to punch the clock at the time agreed upon

so many encores on this particular night that she simply couldn't get away. He thinks we should all go to this trap where she does her stuff and wait for her. So that's what we do.

We get to this movie house too late for the first half of the feature picture, "Married in Fun." The only thing which could of been more disappointin' than missin' the first half of this film would of been not missin' it. It was fearful and no mistake! But finally it comes to a well merited end, the lights go up and on the screen flashes this message to one and all:

*You May Be the World to Your Mother,
But You're an Awful Bust to Me.*

Sung by Colleen Rabinowitz

They is quite a stir in the theater and a general scramble for the exits, but Nero

Whiffletree swells all up like a mump. He looks around at us as proud as a new cop. Both the girls sits up a little straighter. I admit to a mild thrill and even Rough House Riley straightens his tie and smooths back his hair. The evenin's piece of resistance is about to appear.

A little this and that from the organ, and out on the stage steps Colleen Rabinowitz and bursts into song.

Hot bouillon!

Like one man all of us but Nero lets forth a gasp and sinks back in our seats, slapped for a row of East Indian tomato cans! This Colleen Rabinowitz is a tall, thin, red-headed comic, with a face about as plain and unexcitin' as the directions for makin' tea. Never again will she gaze upon her fortieth birthday and they's more angles to her than they is to horse racin'. If she can sing, I can make a seaplane!

Venus D. Milo is gigglin' softly, my wife just sits there petrified and Rough House Riley is busy compositin' appropriate remarks to make to Nero after Colleen has had mercy and quit singin'. But Nero Whiffletree is drinkin' in every line of his young woman's song like it was liquid gold. In the midst of a note which is so cruel and unusual it sent half the customers scurryin' out into the great outdoors, Nero turns to my wife and sighs:

"Ain't she wonderful, no foolin'?"
Before the boss can answer, Rough House Riley takes the rostrum.

"If you and that snapper ever visits the zoo," he says, lookin' from Nero to Colleen, "they'll look on you as the find of the century and they wouldn't let you get away if you cried your eyes out!"

The next second Riley's busy tryin' to find out who kicked him in the ankle with a pointed toe. It was me. Apparently Nero didn't even hear Riley's nasty dig about him and his cutey, because he says nothin' at all.

Well, Colleen quits singin' and we all go round to meet her at the stage entrance. After introductions has flew back and forth like butterflies and Colleen Rabinowitz has showed no signs of bein' overcome with the honor of meetin' any or all of us



Nero's as cool as your ice box should be.

has the ladies of the party champin' on the bit. They've heard nothin' else from the lovelorn Nero but what a eye-soother his entry is and naturally they're as anxious to see her as Columbus was to see Sandy Hook. As for me and Rough House Riley, well, we're less than a foot from death by curiosity.

Nero's uncomely face shows he's findin' out what worry is as the minutes flit past and Colleen Rabinowitz don't. Finally, after he has stared his watch out of countenance, a thought fights its way to the top of his ivory bean. Callin' our attention to the fact that his sweetie sings in a picture theater, he claims she must of got

SOUP MAKES THE WHOLE MEAL TASTE BETTER

I'm simply full of nerve and punch
 For I've had Campbell's for my lunch.
 It gives me all the strength I need
 And makes me just a train for speed!



It's all in knowing how!

And the very first spoonful of Campbell's Vegetable Soup proves it! Thirty-two different ingredients prepared and blended by master-chefs whose whole lives have been devoted to good soup-making! Serving Campbell's regularly is one of the ways a housewife shows she "knows how" to set a good table.

Campbell's Vegetable Soup

is a hearty, filling dish. Sweet little peas, baby limas, juice-laden tomatoes, sugary corn, Chantenay carrots, golden turnips, white and sweet potatoes, chopped cabbage, snowy celery, alphabet macaroni, choice barley, French leeks, okra, and fresh parsley combine their rich flavors and nourishment with invigorating meat broths. Real food when you're hungry!

21 kinds

12 cents a can

Campbell's SOUPS

LOOK FOR THE RED AND WHITE LABEL

Big Leaguers, I remind the gatherin' that I got six ducats for the theater and it's gettin' late. The minute Colleen hears the name of the drama I have picked out she says she's already saw it and besides she don't feel like goin' to a theater, she wants to go to a cabaret. All her remarks is addressed to Nero Whiffletree and although I am the jobbie which has blowed fifty bucks for theater tickets, I could of been in Betelgeuse for all the attention she give me.

Fed up with Nero and Colleen, Rough House Riley and his patootie is showin' unmistakable signs of restlessness, but me and my chatelaine is gourmands for punishment and we led the way to a cabaret without further ado. I used my influence—a twenty dollar bill—with the head waiter and we get parked at a ring-side table where we can see the revue and the dancers and act as a given point for everything else of interest to pass. Food flowed like water and what we drank is nobody's business.

In the next two hours I made two hundred attempts to get Colleen Rabinowitz in conversation long enough to sell her the idea of Nero becomin' a box fighter and I failed just two hundred times. The world's undisputed champion wry-faced male and the holder of the same title in the female division had conversation for nobody but each other. Questions asked 'em brung a short nod in return, when they give us a tumble at all. Every now and then they got up and danced, leavin' us flat without as much as a facsimile of a apology. They act like not only are they alone at our table, but they're alone in the wide wide world. I have saw couples which was partial to each other, but Nero and Colleen would of made Romeo and Juliet look like landlord and tenant. You couldn't of gut Colleen and Nero apart with a injunction! All they needed to make anywhere's Heaven was each other!

Two hours of this licks Rough House Riley and his girl and they complain bitterly, so we took the air. I couldn't even get a word in edgewise to Nero and Company to apologize for leavin' 'em.

Once we get outside, Rough House Riley lets off steam.

"Both them two sapolios looks like they just stepped out of somebody's nightmare," he says, "yet each thinks the other is the lamb's chop! Ain't that a scream?"

"I think it's delightful," says my wife, givin' Rough House a reprovin' stare. "There's something pathetically fascinating in the fact that two people as remarkably unattractive as they are should fall so desperately in love with each other. One of us should go back and apologize for leaving them."

"I'll bet they don't know we left," I says.

"Humph!" snorts Rough House, callin' a taxi for him and his lady friend. "They don't even know we was there!"

But yes they did. Or at least Nero did. The next afternoon the Barber of Seville saunters into Eddie McWagon's gym where Rough House Riley is workin' out for his comin' battle with Montreal Eddie Biff. Without no preliminaries, Nero walks over to Rough House and slaps him on the gleamin' white shoulder blades.

"You big stew!" snarls Nero. "What d'ye mean by tryin' to make my girl last night?"

Rough House Riley stops sparrin' and looks at Nero kind of dazed.

"Me try to make that—that comic valentine!" he gasps. "Why, you poor ——"

"Don't lie to me, you double-crossin' false alarm!" howls Nero. "She told me all about it. How you was incessantly makin' eyes at her and steppin' on her little foot under the table and tryin' to get her phone number. Well, when I get through with you, you'll leave pretty girls alone hereafter!"

Then the fun began.

Nero Whiffletree suddenly swung a glancin' right at Rough House Riley and my champ sits down hard on the floor. Well, Riley has been down before—but he gets up! If I had my way, I'd say that when Riley got up Nero proceeded to smack him for a mock turtle, but I might as well tell the truth. Rough House Riley went around Nero Whiffletree like a cooper around a barrel and when he got tired of cuffin' him he knocked him as stiff as your collar with a left to the jaw. So that was all settled.

I don't see Nero for another week and when I do he's full of surprises. First he says Colleen Rabinowitz has promised to wed him as soon as he can show her fifty thousand pistoles in the bank. Can you feature that? If I was a girl and I looked like Colleen Rabinowitz and somebody asked me to marry 'em, the only conditions I would make is that the party be white. But the lovesick barber don't seem to think that the fifty thousand ransom is a bit unreasonable.

"I'm through barbarin' for the time bein'," he says. "You once made me a proposition to turn scrapper. Well, I have talked matters over with Colleen and she's willin' to have me take it up. She thinks I'm in the movies, you know, and she's willin' to have me do *anything* which will get me out of *that game!*"

"Why?" I says.

"Well," says this human cartoon, smirkin' and brushin' back his wire hair, "she's afraid some of them bathin' beauties might fall for me."

Three months later, "One-Punch Nero," née Nero Whiffletree, is ready to make his first start in a prize ring. Five months later he's ready to make his last! In two months, Nero started five times and lost an even five fights. In four of his battles he's knocked kickin' and in the fifth he quit like a dog. The poisonous right with which he flattened the famous Nitroglycerin Pico that day out in dear old Seville seems to of lost its power as a sleepin' potion and as a boxer Nero was a good barber. I never seen nobody like him and that's a fact. In the gym he was as ferocious as a wounded grizzly, but once he got in the ring he wouldn't harm a flea. He made the worst boloney in the business look like champions once they got boxin' with him. After Nero's first five starts I couldn't of got him in a fight club around New York with a ticket.

In the meantime Nitroglycerin Pico has been goin' through the middleweight division like Sherman went through Georgia. He just don't seem able to lose a fight no matter how he tries. The results is that the sport writers begins clamorin' for Rough House Riley to give Nitro a chance at his title and I can't agree fast enough. I figure that anybody which

Nero can stop with a punch the way he stopped Nitro will be a cinch for Rough House, which in turn had no trouble puttin' Nero to sleep.

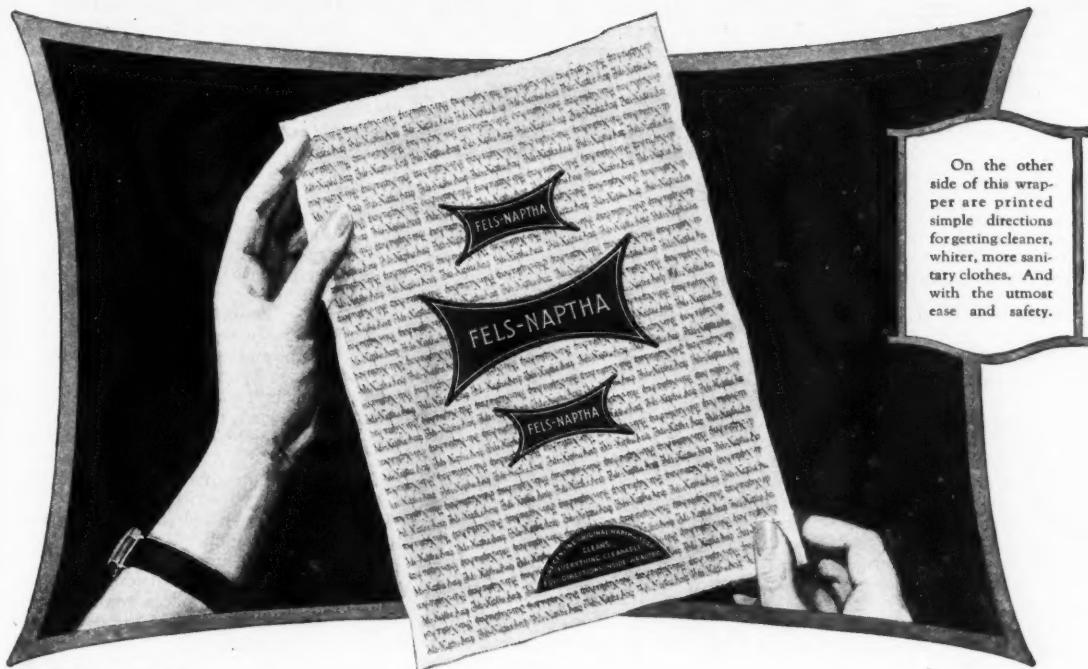
The Rough House Riley-Nitroglycerin Pico middleweight championship battle was a scuffle which will be remembered to their dyin' day by them which was lucky enough to see it. They was as much action in it as they was in the Battle of Manila Bay and it was a much better fight to look at. Both could hit and both could take it and that's what they done to the queen's taste! Each made a half-dozen trips to the canvas durin' the first thirteen frames and then in the fourteenth round Nitro caught Riley comin' in with a short right hook to the button. When Riley opened his eyes the club house was dark and he was ex-middleweight champion.

The next mornin' they is nothin' in the world lower than the way I feel. My visible means of support has been slapped from under his title and the chances is it will be a oversize year before Nitroglycerin Pico will give Rough House Riley a crack at his brand new crown. Well, it was while readin' the mornin' paper accounts of the massacre that I get the big idea. In one paper it says that Nitroglycerin Pico, the new champion, has never been knocked out in his life. Immediately a picture of our old friend Nero Whiffletree sockin' Nitro for a goal pops into my fevered mind. He done it once, maybe he can do it again!

They is nothin' more attractive to me than the impossible. I'd much rather cross the ocean on roller skates than on a boat. Since I was pet of the nursery, tryin' to unscrew the unscrutable has been my hobby. Another thing, nearly every champ in the prize ring has had a guy which was his jinx. A guy which no matter if four thousand other scrappers could knock him out has always had somethin' on the champ. I figured that in this case Nero Whiffletree was Nitroglycerin Pico's jinx and no matter how many tomatoes could put Nero away, he was the new champion's master through that one punch kayo he slipped over on him in Seville. Nero may not be no *world's* champion, but he's champion of Nitroglycerin Pico, is the way I size matters up. At any rate, it's worth a try. With that fifty thousand bucks to accumulate for Colleen Rabinowitz, Nero thinks so too.

Rough House Riley, convalescin' from his wounds, tells me I'm cuckoo when I ask his aid in readyin' Nero for a brush with Riley's conqueror. Riley says Nero couldn't beat Pico or Pico's grandfather if they let Nero come in with a machine gun. The sport writers and the wise crackers around Times Square claims if they had my nerve they'd open up a shipyard in the middle of the Gobi Desert, and a fight between Nero and Pico will kill boxin' wherever it's staged because Pico will reduce Nero to kindlin'. I simply go on takin' the short end of four to one that Nero knocks Pico for a rubish container.

The first tip-off I get that my hunch is correct is when Nitroglycerin Pico absolutely declines the pleasures of meetin' Nero Whiffletree in a ring. His manager claims it's because the bout wouldn't draw flies on the account nobody's ever heard of Nero but me and his parents.



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Thousands who board use Fels-Naptha in their rooms for washing out lingerie, silk stockings, handkerchiefs and other small articles. Where hot water is not convenient, Fels-Naptha makes clothes clean with cool water, just the same.



The original and genuine naptha soap, in the red-and-green wrapper. Buy it in the convenient, ten-bar carton.

Fels-Naptha is a wonderfully efficient laundry soap. It washes clothes so completely clean there isn't the slightest attraction left for germs. Not mere cleanliness, but Fels-Naptha Cleanliness!

Those little dirt-patches where germs feed and breed may be invisible to the naked eye, but the real naptha in Fels-Naptha finds and flushes them out. Its work done, the naptha vanishes, leaving the clothes clean, sweet and sanitary.

Use Fels-Naptha for your finery, as well as for the heavier, dirtier pieces. Remember, it "washes everything washable; cleans everything cleanable." And the results are agreeably surprising!

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FELS-NAPTHA

THE GOLDEN BAR WITH THE CLEAN NAPTHA ODOR

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Philadelphia

That's tapioca puddin' to me. I know one guy which has heard of Nero and his name is Nitroglycerin Pico! I'm now positive that Pico's more than afraid to step into the ring with the only baby which has ever knocked him cold. Old Si Cology has marked Pico for his own.

On one pretext and then another Nitro stalls out of the match till the sport writers begins to kid him for bein' faint hearted. A few columns of this done the trick and Nitroglycerin Pico signs to fight Nero Whiffetree twenty rounds for the world's middleweight championship.

I couldn't dare let Nero fight anybody else before he sunk his teeth in Nitro because I'm afraid some tramp will smack him stiff and ruin the championship fight. So I kept him strictly under cover till the night of the big muss. Between the kiddin' and the what not, the fight had been pretty well smoked up and when Nero climbed through the ropes to make his bid for the world's middleweight championship the crowd would make you think they was nobody from this side in France with Pershing but his horse. Pico is a six to one ringside favorite and me and Nero has got every nickel we own in the world bet that we make a pass!

I never in my life seen nobody as confident as Nero Whiffetree is that night, the biggest evenin' of his life. Ordinarily he was as nervous and pale before the bell as a guy bein' hung for the first time, but tonight he's as cool as your ice box should

be. He waves and grins to the boys around the ringside till the sport writers swears I got him doped.

"The only time I ever took a punch at this parsnip, I laid him like a carpet," he says to me while I'm tyin' on his gloves. "I'll do it again tonight as sure as I'll leave this ring with fifty thousand bucks and a first mortgage on Colleen Rabinowitz."

I go over to the other corner and find a pale and tremblin' champ, starin' gloomily across the ring at the smilin' Nero. This is the first time he's saw the barber since that fatal day in Seville and you can't tell me that Nitro ain't thinkin' heavy of what happened when Nero socked him then. When the men comes to the middle of the ring for the referee's instructions, Nero grins happily right into Pico's face and Pico shudders and stares at his shoes. They shake hands and the crowd settles back to watch Nitro give Nero a boxin' lesson and then knock him dead. I comence prayin' and—the bell rings.

Nero shot across the ring like a bullet keepin' a date to where Nitro stands seemin'ly dazed and with a sickly grin on his pan.

Sock!

The barber's well oiled right starts back of his ankle and comes to rest on Pico's chin. The back somersault Pico done would of win him fame in a circus. It lost him his title here, though, because when he hit the floor it was for a indefinite stay.

Back in the dressin' room I pay off Nero his share of the purse and bets—a mere fifty-six thousand iron men. Colleen Rabinowitz, standin' hard by, grins slightly, takes the money and gets straight faced again.

"In a couple of months we'll fight a set-up and get thirty thousand more for our end," I begins. "Now—"

"Where d'ye get that *we stuff*?" butts in Nero. "You fight the set-up, I'm through with the ring! The only guy I can lick in the wide, wide world is Nitroglycerin Pico and they'll laugh him out of the game after what I done to him tonight. Another thing, Colleen is afraid if I stay in the ring I'll get my face all cut up and she don't want my looks spoiled, money or no!"

She don't want his *looks* spoiled. Say—you couldn't of spoiled that guy's looks if you combed his face with a broken bottle!

"Will you give Rough House Riley a chance at your title?" I says. "I made you what you are today and in doin' it I lost my champ."

"That's tough," says Nero. "Close the door from the outside!"

And him and Colleen goes into a clinch.

But six months later he did give Riley a chance and Riley wins back his title in two rounds. Today, Nero Whiffetree's got one of the biggest barber shops on Broadway and right next door Colleen's runnin' a beauty shop.

Be good!

In February COSMOPOLITAN comes an H. C. Witwer story you will not dare read aloud, or you will spoil it by laughing. It's called "Julius Sees Her."

Ponjola

(Continued from page 79)

The night before the trial, meditating in her little room trying to collect all her forces to meet the coming ordeal, she was broken in upon by the jailer's wife—a dot of a woman with a whispering voice and a will of iron, who ruled the jail and everyone in it.

"A lady wants to see you," she murmured, looking at Desmond with the fond eyes characteristic of childless women when they find someone they can love.

"But Mrs. Brade, you know I can't—unless it's Mrs. Hope?"

"It's not. She won't give her name and she's all veiled up but I think I can guess who it is."

Desmond stared.

"She grew up among us," whispered Mrs. Brade. "One of Rhodesia's lovely children! If only she had married Lundi Druro!"

Lypiatt's wife! Desmond grew very pale. "I can't—" she said hoarsely.

"I think you ought to," urged Mrs. Brade. "The poor thing!"

Desmond walked to the window and gazed out at a row of euphorbia trees growing in the courtyard, inked grotesquely against the last glow of the evening sky. It was not that she feared reproaches; instead she was in terror that Gay might probe out the truth. Only one thought suddenly calmed her. Even if she did probe it out she too loved Druro and would be ready to help save him.

"Let her come in, Mrs. Brade." Pres-

ently there was the rustle of a dress, and the sound of a door softly closed, and Desmond and Gay were alone in the falling dusk.

"It was kind of you to see me!"

"Won't you sit down?" Desmond remained standing, back to the window. She did not want her face read. But Gay pushed back her cloudy veils and in the somber cell she gleamed with an alluring pearly beauty. No wonder Druro had been unable to forget her, thought Desmond. There was a spirituality about her that was like a promise of eternity. If a man could not gain Heaven of himself, with such a woman loving him he must get in somehow, surely, redeemed by her love and shielded by her wing!

Yet she had failed Lundi Druro! Not once, but twice.

Never could Desmond forgive that, and the memory steeled her heart and voice now:

"I cannot imagine what you can derive from this visit, Mrs. Lypiatt!"

"I want to beg your mercy," was the unexpected reply, murmured low.

"My—I don't understand."

There was a silence.

"It is about tomorrow." It was plain that she was in great agitation, and Desmond spoke now without irony.

"How can I be of use to you? Will you explain?"

Gay stammered at last:

"Are you going to tell that my husband knew you were a woman?"

"Certainly not. Never!" Desmond, taken by surprise, unfortunately gave the truth away; then, too late, tried to rectify the admission. "Besides, how could he know?"

But Gay only shook her head dolorously.

"That is good of you," she whispered. "But he *did* know and you know that he knew."

"I can't think what grounds you have for such a belief."

"He told me."

"O Lord!" said Desmond in a dismal boyish way very characteristic of her. "I never meant anyone to know that he . . ."

Gay watched her through bitter tears, humility and admiration in her glance.

"Don't you realize that if that fact is made clear it will get you off at once?"

"No, I don't," Desmond said obstinately. But they both knew the temper of Rhodesians and what their attitude was likely to be toward a man who knowingly attacked a woman and nearly throttled her. "Even if it would I shall never breathe it. Put your mind at rest on that point."

"How cruel and selfish you must think me—to ask it."

"Indeed I don't."

"But it is not for myself," continued Gay brokenly. "I would never ask it—never permit it, except for the sake of the child—"

"Oh!" The trembling exclamation



Is your skin exceptionally sensitive?

Is your skin especially hard to take care of?

Wind, dust, exposure: do they continually irritate and roughen it?

You can correct this extreme sensitiveness. By giving your skin the special treatment it needs, you can overcome its tendency to become painful, irritated, on the least occasion.

Use this special treatment for a very sensitive skin:

Each night before retiring, dip a soft wash-cloth in warm water and hold it to your face. Then make a warm water lather of Woodbury's Facial Soap and dip your cloth up and down in it until the cloth is "fluffy" with the soft white lather. Rub this lathered cloth gently over your skin until the pores are thoroughly cleansed. Then rinse, first with warm, then with clear cool water, and dry carefully.

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WOODBURY'S FACIAL SOAP

broke from Desmond. This was tragedy worse than death! She did not know what to say, how to hide from the lovely desecrated creature what commiseration she felt for her. To bear a child of Constant Lypiatt's! Her mind cast wildly about for some oblation of pity to make.

"You have every right to hate me and to want to shield your husband's memory," she said at last. "And I can tell you one thing. It was my fault he attacked me. Woman or no woman, no man could have sat still under the cruel jibe with which I goaded him."

Gay's eyes looked at her, tragic but incredulous.

"I tell you that any man with blood in his veins would have done it. Why, it was *you* I attacked. I told him one had only to look into your eyes to see that you loved—someone else."

"Oh God!" breathed the other.

"Can you be surprised that he flung himself at me in a frenzy? Any man who loved his wife would have done it, and there is no doubt that he loved you—beyond all things!"

"What made you say it?" moaned Gay, her face pale as death.

"Just a woman's bitter tongue, I suppose," said Desmond lamely. She hadn't the heart to smite her with the whole truth. "I was hating him pretty badly."

"You have hated me pretty badly too? And despised me?"

"No," Desmond replied slowly. "Not exactly. But it has always been incomprehensible to me—why."

There was a long silence before she went on:

"You see . . . I met Lundi Druro one night in Paris—just at the time he was coming back to marry you. You were the star of his existence; the sun and moon of it. I don't believe any girl was ever so much loved. Such a noble passion, so pure in spite of its ardor, burning with such a clean flame. Men had loved me too, I was accustomed to monopolizing their attention, but he didn't even see me—except to talk to, about you. That's why he didn't remember me out here, recognize me I mean. His whole mind and heart and soul were filled by you. For you only he was alive."

Gay was shaking like a slim tree in a gale, but not weeping. Her eyes were dry and staring. Desmond went on, her voice somber, relentless. She was not thinking of the woman but of the man.

"I came out here a year later, disguised, as you know. I wanted to look upon this perfect marriage—to gaze like the beggar in hell upon the feast of happiness. The first thing I saw at Wankelo station was the broken down, hopeless wreck you had made of Lundi Druro."

She had not meant to say it, but the truth like long concealed fire had come flaring out.

Outside all was dark now. The last glow of day had gone and the moon had not risen. Even the euphorbias were hidden under night's somber shawl. In the room too all was dark. They could not see each other's faces, those two women, and they did not look at each other. Desmond stood staring out, pondering some words Gay had said behind her there in the dim room.

"I have never told anyone—but I will tell you now. My reason for not marrying

Lundi Druro was because I wanted to save him and myself from the curse of drink."

Desmond had time to ponder that a long while before Gay's voice continued:

"You may have heard that my father and brother were drowned trying to cross the Shangani River? They were drunk; that was why they were drowned."

Another aching silence.

"Lundi was in England. I had much time alone in which to think. I recalled my mother's life until I was twelve, when she died—one long tragic struggle of nights and days with a foe that was stronger than herself. She fought the beast drink for the soul of my father, and she lost. Drink was too strong. Then my brother started before my mother died. I loved Derry—next to Lundi. He was clever, witty, gay. So chivalrous. So generous. It was only that one fault he had—and that, I think, not entirely his fault. He had inherited thirst without inheriting a will to control it. They drank like gentlemen and they were always delightful—but a little bit less so daily. Infinitesimally I saw them being destroyed before my eyes day by day. I was glad when they were drowned.

"In the loneliness that followed I made the terrible discovery that *I too had the thirst. The curse was in me*. You know the careless way people up here take 'sun-downers' and 'pick-me-ups.' I had acquired the habit and thought nothing of it, but all the time drink had been putting its roots in, and I had to begin fighting against it day and night. I was determined to conquer it for Lundi's sake. But I found I could only conquer by keeping away from the sight and smell of the stuff. At last I realized that forever and ever I should have to put up the battle of spiritual resistance, of prayer and of *absence from temptation*, and for that reason I dared not marry Lundi. Even if he were strong enough to give it up we should always be in contact with it and I could not face the prospect. I thought of the children we might have—more victims to the long struggle. I could not face that."

Soft, sighing sobs fell in the darkness. Desmond did not stir or utter a word of the grief that was in her heart. She knew that nothing she could say or do would avail. Gay was one of "Sorrow's elect." She was good, she had done right by the light that was in her, but she must pay, pay to the end of her days for the sins of the fathers.

"I married Constant to protect Druro from my love and to help myself to face fate. He hated drink. That was his great appeal for me. I told him the truth and he was content to marry me even at that. But he could not forget, afterwards, that I had loved Druro, and we were never happy."

And that was the end of the story. A little while afterwards she went away. They parted with a handclasp in the darkness, never to meet again.

CHAPTER XVIII

ON THE first day of the Sessions, Wankelo simmered with excitement and was full of strange faces. But everyone seemed curiously reticent. Men looked at each other hard but said little. The subject of "young Desmond's" trial was

in all minds, and one hope in each man's heart—that he would not be called to sit on the jury.

On the stroke of ten Derwent Henry Douglas, Solicitor-General for Rhodesia and conductor of cases for the Crown, stepped briskly from the Falcon. A popular man with a powerful job; but no one envied it that morning.

Inside the court the air was already breathless. A policeman resplendent in full uniform bawled forth:

"All arise in court!"

A door opened and Judge Vernon escorted by the sheriff stepped quickly to his seat, casting a shrewd but kindly glance about him. Men thought it propitious that the sessions should have fallen to Vernon. You could always be certain not only of fair play when he sat on the bench, but of a little milk and honey of human kindness too. Men suddenly remembered that the woman who was in all their thoughts had been one of the "youngsters" the Judge had liked to have near him at dinners and in the club. Desmond's gay repartee and exquisite cynicisms had always delighted him. It was not going to be any pleasanter for judge than for jury.

Abruptly looking up from his papers, he addressed the Solicitor-General: "What cases do you propose to take?"

Douglas rose and adjusted a pair of pince-nez before his shrewd blue eyes.

"The chief case is Crown versus Desmond," he said, and paused in the tense stillness. Feet ceased to shuffle. Not a whisper was heard. The judge glanced at his papers.

"I see that Desmond pleads not guilty," he remarked at last. "So it will probably occupy most of the day. In case it does we may as well arrange for the next two or three in rotation. Cite them, please."

The tense moment passed and men breathed naturally again.

The Solicitor-General busily recited his cases—all native.

"We will now take Crown versus Desmond," said the Judge. "Bring in the prisoner and proceed to call the jury."

A profound hush followed. The little courthouse, with sunlight and the scent of flowers streaming through the windows, did not look like a stage for tragedy, yet tragedy came stalking softly and laying its cold hand on every heart when two uniformed policemen entered ushering "young Desmond."

To everyone's relief she was wearing the clothes they knew so well—the loose tweed coat that gave her otherwise boyish shoulders a wide and burly effect, the rather *bouffante* riding breeches of khaki, and the tan topboots that no one ever dreamed hid a woman's slim foot. She had had to fight hard to appear in that familiar garb. O'Byrne, bitterly opposed to it, and computing the value of feminine grâces suitably arrayed, had caused a beautiful simple gown to be sent from Cape Town. But Desmond would have none of it, realizing very well the danger that lay for her in women's garments—not of conviction but acquittal. If they saw her as a woman they would never believe she had killed Lypiatt. At best they might prefer to give her the benefit of the doubt. And she wanted neither doubt nor benefit. So she was just the same as usual, swinging along with careless but firm gait, hands thrust forward

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Each night your skin needs a thorough cleansing. Always use the cream with just enough oil

The kind of cream for a thorough cleansing

No skin can be always lovely unless it is kept really clean.

To have skin with lovely transparency, softness and smoothness, you must give it a thorough cleansing *every night*.

Ordinary washing is not enough. It cannot reach the fine particles of dirt that bore deep into the pores. If this dirt is allowed to remain your skin becomes dull looking—it loses its lovely transparency. For a thorough cleansing your face needs a cream; and its choice is all important.

Only a cream made with oil can reach the deepest dirt. There must be *just enough oil* to remove every particle of dirt—not a drop more because creams with too much oil overload the pores and make the skin greasy. It must not be stiff because stiff creams are

difficult to work in, and when once in the pores have a tendency to remain and stretch them. The cream that meets all the requirements for a thorough cleansing is Pond's *Cold Cream*.

Start using this cream tonight

Wash your face first. Then smooth in Pond's *Cold Cream*. In a minute it works its way deep into your pores and out again bringing every bit of dirt and powder with it. Wipe it off on a soft towel or bit of cloth. The grime will astonish you.

For *daytime* uses your skin needs another cream—a very different one—Pond's *Vanishing Cream*. It is perfect as a foundation for powder.

Both these creams are so delicate in texture they cannot clog the pores. Neither contains anything that can promote the growth of hair. The Pond's Extract Co., New York.

GENEROUS TUBES—MAIL COUPON TODAY

POND'S EXTRACT CO.,
242 Hudson St., New York.

Ten cents (10c.) is enclosed for your special introductory tubes of the two creams every normal skin needs—enough of each cream for two weeks' ordinary toilet uses.

Name.....

Street.....

City..... State.....

POND'S
Cold Cream for cleansing
Vanishing Cream
to hold the powder

He who smokes last smokes best

Wherein our correspondent takes a long shot at Zanesville, O.

When we printed a letter from a smoker who professed a preference for the early morning smoke, apparently we started something. Almost the next mail brought along a batch of letters, among which the following is a fair sample:

"Dear Sirs:

"Will you allow me to take issue with your A. K. K. from Zanesville who insists that the best pipe of the day is the one smoked right after breakfast?

"Of course, I have no intimate knowledge of local conditions down in Southern Ohio, but up here the majority of us regular pipe smokers have a decided leaning towards the last pipe of the evening.

"Take a night when you are sitting in front of the fire after the neighbors have gone. Your wife suggests it is bed-time, and while you admit it is, you have a craving for one last smoke. She goes on upstairs and you promise to follow directly. But instead you take out your pipe and light up. You smoke slowly and peacefully, calling out at intervals that you'll be there in a minute. Only you don't go until the last ash has died in the bowl of your pipe.

"That's my idea of the best smoke of the day.

"Yes, sir, for every smoker A. K. K. can produce who likes his after-breakfast pipe best, I'll guarantee to name a dozen men who prefer the last smoke of the evening. And most of us are Edgeworth smokers, too.

Yours very sincerely,
(Signed) T. S. FLINT,
New York City."

Yes, as we suggested above, when we gave space to an expression of opinion about which is the best pipe of the day, we started something. But we are glad to open our columns to friendly discussions about pipes and smoking in general.

So if you have any particular notions, fads or fancies, send them along.

And if you aren't an Edgeworth smoker, be sure and tell us about it. For we want to send you free samples, generous helpings both of Edgeworth Plug Slice and Ready-Rubbed.

Edgeworth has made friends all over the World. Some smokers may not care for Edgeworth, but those who do, we believe, settle down and never smoke any other tobacco the rest of their lives.

Edgeworth is sold in various sizes to suit the needs and means of all purchasers.

For the free samples address Larus & Brother Company, 61 South 21st Street, Richmond, Va. If you will also add the name of the dealer to whom you will go if you should like Edgeworth, we would appreciate that courtesy on your part.

To Retail Tobacco Merchants: If your jobber cannot supply you with Edgeworth, Larus & Brother Company will gladly send you prepaid by parcel post a one- or two-dozen carton of any size of Edgeworth Plug Slice or Ready-Rubbed for the same price you would pay the jobber.



in pockets, head flung back. Only, her curly satirical smile had been exchanged for an expression reserved and inscrutable, and she wore her hat pulled low over her eyes so that none might read them. There was a moment's laughter when the clerk of the court, from force of habit, said sternly, "Hats off in court!" and then suddenly subsided, covered with confusion at his own stupidity. Even Desmond smiled, but it passed instantly and her lips closed again in a firm line.

After a slight bow to the judge on entering she never looked his way again. She was sorry for that kind, handsome man with whom she had so often jested.

The business of picking the jury went rapidly forward, the clerk gabbling from a list the names of those eligible for this duty. The names, written on small cards, were then placed in a box and a jury of nine drawn. As the clerk shouted each name its owner disengaged himself from the crowd and slouched to the front, cursing his luck and wishing he were dead.

By a curious and ironical circumstance not a single friend of Desmond's had chanced to be drawn. In fact only two of those who wriggled uneasily upon the seats of judgment had ever even spoken to her. Rhodesian juries were a mixed lot at any time, but this one surpassed the record. There was a baker, a gardener of Teutonic origin, a Greek purveyor of sundries, a farmer, a hotel proprietor, a barman, a bank clerk and of course a mine manager. What jury would have been complete without a manager of sorts? This one as it happened came from one of Lypiatt's small properties. But he was known to be a straight fellow and no one objected to him.

With all in order the Solicitor-General rose and stated his case for the Crown. He did not use any rhetoric—just recited the bare facts, and they were bad enough. His concise yet homely phrases, delivered without a shade of prejudice in a pleasant Scotch accent, echoed through the court like mellow knells of doom.

The indictment of:

"This woman whom we know by no other name than 'young Desmond'—who has been among us for more than a year—in the unsuspected guise of a man," was damning in its sheer simplicity. People were almost afraid to look at the dock. They need not have been, for Desmond sat unmoved, her violet eyes gazing straight before her in a grave, trance-like glance.

The array of witnesses who had already given brief evidence at the inquest then took the box one by one and held it through the long hot hours of the morning. The lawyers argued and bickered, interfering with each other and browbeating those witnesses whose evidence was not to their taste.

O'Byrne had his hands full, as he had anticipated, with the Cape Town barrister. Douglas, a fair and square opponent, unbiased in his duty, was simple to deal with; the Hollander, a heavy-lipped brute with the soul of a sensualist and the tongue of an asp, was out for blood. But the Irishman was alert to the attack and on guard at every defense.

Through all, the accused sat very still, cheek resting on hand, eyes serene, like one whose mind is away on pleasant travels. She had pleaded not guilty because she had to do so—no other plea is allowed to a person charged with killing a fellow mortal.

But she did nothing to back up and further the plea, and it early transpired that she would not be put into the witness box. This had an unhealthy look and caused depression amongst her friends. For when a person is innocent what more sane than to stand up and say so? The simpler the statement the better. Truth has a tongue and an air of its own.

But Desmond had no simple statement to make and preferred rather that the world should believe a lie than that she should be forced to speak the truth.

Though she looked so composed and aloof there, her heart often throbbed like an infernal machine that must soon explode. And her pulse was at fever pitch for fear of one thing—that Lundi Druro might turn up before the matter was settled, before she had been sentenced and swept out of sight. She knew from Guthrie that he had lately been regaining health and would presently have to be told what had happened. But she had not seen Guthrie for some days and was not aware that the prosecution had sent to take Druro's evidence on commission. When she realized this, and that the evidence was to be used against her, it thrilled through her like an electric shock of mingled relief and pain. For the first time her composure failed. She grew deadly pale and a little mist as if of tears came over her steady eyes. Strange that anything Druro had said could be turned against her! Strange that that hand she had warmed with the fires of her heart should aim a weapon at it! She did not really believe it. It was some vagary of the law that had twisted what he said into:

"I, Francis Everard Druro, being on a bed of sickness and unable to come forward at His Majesty's behest . . . do hereby take oath and declare . . . I know nothing about the death of Constant Lypiatt at my camp . . . and can give no information whatsoever as to how it came about."

There was more, dealing with a few disjointed memories of the day, but Desmond did not catch it. A buzzing and singing in her ears, a fiendish clamor in her brain, prevented her from hearing. She felt mortally sick too, and as though if she were not very careful she would fall from an exceedingly high point into a deep and jagged ravine. The only thing she could do to prevent this fall was to keep her eyes fixed on a little yellow smiling face she could see through the courthouse window. A sunflower had grown far above the other flowers in the garden and turned its face her way—friendly golden face beaming like a star upon this dark impasse of her life.

She could not possibly know that the statement just read out, and of which she had heard only the beginning, was the result of expert questioning that elicited much and told nothing. Druro had not been informed who was charged with the murder and under what circumstances it had supposedly been committed. The precarious state of weakness to which he had fallen forbade excitement; also, Doctor Ryan, fearing brain trouble for his patient, had insisted on certain facts being concealed. So the prosecution had tenderly hidden from him the plight of his friend Desmond. He was told no more than that Lypiatt had been found dead in his camp. Even that was enough to send him into a wild fever.

"But what was he doing there? Who

The Road of the Loving Heart

ON an Enchanted Island—

of the South Seas where the shining water is ever the sky's blue looking-glass, runs the Ala Loto Alofa, The Road of the Loving Heart—a Road of Gratitude.

The Road was built by the Samoan chiefs for their beloved "Tusitala"—Teller of Tales—as they called Robert Louis Stevenson, the Beloved of every nation.

In thanking the old chiefs who built the road as an expression of gratitude for his never failing kindness, Stevenson said:

"When a road is once built, every year as it goes on, more and more people are found to walk thereon . . . so perhaps even this road of ours may be useful for hundreds and hundreds of years. And it is my hope that our far away descendants may remember and bless those who labored for them today."

Stevenson's Road—paved with love and gratitude—led to the Island home he built in a world-wide quest for health. The Road still climbs up the mountainside to Vailima, and is trod yearly by hundreds who visit Stevenson's former home because of their Gratitude for the priceless heritage of his life and writings.

But a far greater Road—

is being built today—a road on which year after year more and more grateful people shall walk. A Road which shall not only endure for hundreds of years, but for all time. A Road for which far away descendants will remember and bless those who are laboring for them now.

It is the Road of Health—

Its builders are far-seeing physicians and public and private health agencies.

The Road of Health is the only road upon which the sun shines. It is the only Road from which the real beauties of life can be seen. It is the Road sign-posted with Happiness and Success. It is the Road which leads to the Delectable Mountains of fulfilled hopes and ambitions.

Health is not the monopoly of any one group or class. And so the Road of Health is a great Public Highway open to all who keep themselves physically fit to travel it.

For however smooth a Roadbed—

however free from dangers, wrecks cannot be avoided unless the machine that travels the road is in good

Nine years ago the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company became convinced that frequent examinations of the bodily machine would not only add to health and happiness but would lead to prolongation of life. The Company thereupon arranged to offer periodic physical examinations, free of charge, to a large group of its policy holders.

The record indicates that among the persons so examined on whom the Company had an experience of five or more years following examination, there was a saving of 28% in mortality over what otherwise would have been expected under the general mortality experience of the Company. So satis-

factory have been the results that the field of these examinations has been extended by the Company beyond the limits originally imposed.

The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company provides also periodic medical examinations of its employees. The first examination showed marked physical defects in 25% of them. A year later more than one-half of these impairments had been overcome.

Workers in American industries are said to lose one billion dollars in wages annually because of sickness and accident—much of which is preventable. It has been estimated that six hundred thousand people die needlessly every

condition. And just as no locomotive or motor would be sent out, even on the best of roads, without occasional examination, so the human body—the greatest machine in the world—must be thoroughly examined by your doctor and regularly overhauled, if wrecks along the Road of Life are to be avoided.

Failure to have the complex human machine examined regularly means that you are ever in danger of being side-tracked to—the Road of Sickness—a road over which many thousands needlessly struggle.

The First Baby Steps—

should be taken on the safe, smooth Road of Health. On it the boy and girl should travel eagerly to school. From it the young business man and woman must not be allowed to stray. Fathers and mothers will find it the one shining road that leads to a Happy Home.

Stretching clean and white before you is the untrodden Road of the New Year.

Therefore Be it Resolved—

to swing wide the Gateway to the Road of Health—the wonderful new Road of Gratitude.

Take the first step today—become a traveler on the sunny, joyous thoroughfare—go to your doctor and have a thorough examination made of your body mechanism. The man and woman who find out just how they stand physically can, by proper care and right living, learn to avoid the Road of Sickness—can lengthen life and can get far more out of it.

Have your children examined. The examination of a child oftentimes means the discovery of disease tendencies or of defects which, taken in time, can be cured or corrected. It may save deformities, blindness or suffering that would make death preferable to life.

Get a clean bill of health—your passport for

A Happy New Year!

year in the United States—die years before their time. Within the past twenty years the average life span in the United States has been lengthened at least six years—a wonderful promise of what can be accomplished in the years to come when, along with other preventive measures, periodic health examinations shall have become the rule rather than the exception.

The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company will gladly mail without charge to anyone requesting it a copy of its helpful booklet entitled "*The Ounce of Prevention*". It tells the whole story of what is here but briefly outlined.

HALEY FISKE, President



Published by

METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY — NEW YORK

did it?" he muttered, leaping up from his pillow with glittering eyes. The doctor, placing a hand on his shoulder, had flung a warning look at the inquisition. Wherefore they answered glibly:

"We don't know. We're trying to find out. You must help us by remembering all you can of that day and night."

"But I can't remember anything. My mind is an absolute blank from the time I left in the afternoon. I can only dimly recall riding towards camp . . . and once, after that, leading my horse up to an ant heap and getting on again. I suppose I had fallen off—probably that's how I got this bruise on my temple. Anyway, I must have been raving in delirium and wonder I got back to camp at all, as you say I did."

But how was Desmond to know of these things? She could only listen to the words, be thankful with her brain for their import, and suffer with her heart.

At luncheon time everyone scurried out of court, breathlessly anxious to exchange opinions, and Desmond in a little side room sat down to a dainty luncheon served by Mrs. Brade. But she could do no more than drink a cup of tea. Her throat was parched, her appetite flown. In a few moments O'Byrne came bustling in to consult with her, and she was left alone with him. She thought he looked at her oddly with some kind of fresh interest, but her brain was too sick and weary to bother much. O'Byrne did not understand, but supposing her to be depressed over the morning's evidence tried to cheer her up. He had not finished with them, he boasted gleefully. There was another shot or two in his locker yet . . . more than a shot—a cannon ball.

"I'll wake 'em up!" he said. "And as for Druro's evidence on commission, rats to it. I'll have the man himself here tomorrow, and we'll get more out of him than that."

"What?"

"Yes. Guthrie tells me he insists on getting up and coming over. Wait till I get busy on him! See if I can't make him remember a few things in our favor . . ."

"You must stop him from coming," interrupted Desmond, aghast.

"Stop him! Nonsense! Why should I stop him? Besides, he's a friend. Guthrie says he is mad to help you. Is it likely there would be any harm in anything he——"

"Yes . . . yes there is harm. I implore you, Mr. O'Byrne. Get a message to him. Beg him for my sake to stay away. Tell him I can't stand it. It will kill me."

O'Byrne glared in exasperation. But he was not surprised. He knew very well there was more in the case than had been told him. His client had never given him her full confidence and he did not blame her, but he considered there was a limit to reserve and that she went beyond it. As to preventing Druro from coming forward he had no intention of the sort. He hoped to drag all he could out of the latter once he got him in the witness box, and perhaps something his client would not tell him might transpire that could be twisted in her favor.

As it was, a priceless revelation had been made to him within the last hour of which he intended to take full advantage. A *grande coup* that he was not going to have

crabbed by his client, so he decided to say nothing to her about it. It would only agitate her. He looked at her solicitously. He didn't want her agitated. Her composed and noble bearing in the dock was compatible with innocence and had made a good impression. He wanted that to continue and did not at all like the look of fright that had now come into her face. So he soothed her with the prediction that Druro would be far too ill to come over anyway and hurried away to make his arrangements for the afternoon.

She did not see him again until they were in court; then he nodded and made a sign to signify that it was all right. She understood him to mean that Druro would not arrive and was greatly relieved, for she felt she could not bear much more. The events of the morning had tried her bitterly. The reading of that strange phrase of Druro's had shaken the very foundations of her self-control. She wanted him to go free and unaccused, she desired to suffer in his stead. Yet . . . she could not bear that phrase she had heard read . . . These painful thoughts occupied her mind to the exclusion of all interest in what was happening in court; but suddenly her blind gaze fixed itself on a strange and unexpected apparition. Loochia Luff, a vision of soft blues and grays, in a picture hat under which her eyes looked very languorous and long-lashed, was occupying the witness box! And Desmond's heart turned cold as she realized that O'Byrne was silkily questioning her as a witness for the defense.

"Will you kindly tell the court how you came to know that Constant Lypiatt went that night to the Jubilate Deo, and to the hut where he met his death, in the full knowledge that the prisoner was a woman?"

"No!" a voice cried loudly.

It was Desmond who had sprung to her feet and flung out a hand, half in command, half in appeal, to the woman in the box. All eyes were turned to the dock in astonishment. She knew neither what she did nor said then, but two things quelled and silenced her—the judge's frowning reprimand and the subtle malice of Loochia's shaded eyes. Protest was useless. She was constrained to sit still under the soft tide of words that rose and fell from the lips of this unexpected witness.

Mrs. Luff spoke very earnestly, and her mien was of one eager to help in a soft, feminine way; to proffer her modest services as champion for another woman's hopeless cause; to do her best for a fellow creature. And since that guileless air had deceived the astute O'Byrne, small wonder it took in the rest of the world—all, that is to say, except her own husband and the prisoner in the dock. They knew. That eager expression of hopeful well doing with which she launched each carefully prepared phrase did not deceive either of those two.

"About three months ago Mr. Lypiatt was in my sitting room at Gatooma just before he went down country. We had occasion to be looking through a number of boxes in search of certain documents relating to our mine and hotel recently closed, and my husband being away I was helping Mr. Lypiatt. We had only recently moved and a lot of illustrated papers were among the things we had brought. Mr. Lypiatt got interested in some old Sketches and suddenly gave an ex-

clamation that drew my attention to a full page portrait. It was a lady rather celebrated in London society about three years ago for her beauty and for a mysterious tragedy with which she had been associated."

Mrs. Luff paused, perhaps for effect, but was told very brusquely by the judge to get to her point.

"I at once noticed the extraordinary resemblance between the picture and—and"—she paused again and looked sadly, almost tenderly towards the dock—"and someone we both knew," she murmured, overcome with emotion.

"Was that someone the lady in the dock, known to you as young Desmond?" queried O'Byrne, more than satisfied with his *grande coup*, for court, counsel and public were alike transfixed at this fresh development.

"It was," said Loochia, clear as a bell.

Those watching saw Desmond lean back in her seat as though very tired; the wardress put a supporting arm round her. But O'Byrne had his back to his client. Besides, he now had to clamor and fight for the evidence of the witness to be accepted. And he was working for a grand climax.

"What happened then?" he demanded when he had shouted everyone including the judge into silence.

"I protested that it must be merely a striking resemblance, but Mr. Lypiatt then told me that he had known ever since he took young Desmond to hospital and carried him into the ward that he was a woman in disguise." Profound emotion surged through the court.

"What then?"

"Lypiatt tore two pages from the Sketch and took them away with him. One page had a full length portrait, the other showed the same woman in the costumes of various rôles in private theatricals."

O'Byrne here made a dramatic interjection.

"Those folded pages, my Lord, were found upon the body of Lypiatt, and are produced for your information and that of the gentlemen of the jury."

The judge had already been earnestly studying them; they were now passed to the jury, rustling from hand to hand, while curiosity and excitement past bearing agitated the public. The significance of the evidence had not taken long to penetrate men's minds, and what remained of Lypiatt's reputation was in the dust. He had known she was a woman yet had gone to her hut at night, waylaid her, attacked her, terribly injured her throat. Small blame to her then for fighting him in self-defense. More power to her indeed that she had managed to throw him, and since he was killed in the overthrowing a good job too.

Each time a jurymen relinquished his hold of the printed pictures he turned and stared with amazement and poignant curiosity towards the dock. But his stare requited him nothing. As for those standing and sitting at the back of the court they were sick to bursting point with a furious longing to be let into the secret. The rising of the Solicitor-General to cross-examine the witness—still standing there with her eager air of wearying not in well doing—brought a dead hush over all. He had only one or two questions to put.

"You say this happened some months



A dramatic incident in the life of Josiah Wedgwood was his presentation to Queen Charlotte of a table service, called by him "Queen's Ware." It has been said of Wedgwood that the whole subsequent course of pottery manufacture was influenced by the beauty and accuracy of his workmanship. His was the matchless skill that commands the admiration and spurs the ambitions of every artist and artisan.

Matchless Skill



ORTUNATE forman's progress is the matchless skill with which a few individuals are endowed. For in these too rare instances are the worthiest standards of art and work established.

Josiah Wedgwood was, beyond dispute, the master potter of the ages. Yet his genius was not content with self-achievement. His splendid works, built at Hanley, England, in 1769, enabled other craftsmen to flourish under his guidance. And the beauty and value of Wedgwood wares were brought to the whole world.

In another time and in another field, the name

Firestone has come to stand for the highest accomplishment—to set a new standard in the important industry of tire building.

It commands respect and has won to enduring fame because it, too, represents matchless skill in the coördinated effort of thousands of expert workers.

Firestone Tires, in the mileage they deliver, have fully demonstrated the superiority of Firestone workmanship and the special manufacturing methods employed. Since first the world came to judge them twenty-two years ago they have consistently fulfilled the highest pledge of tire-worth—

Most Miles per Dollar

Firestone

before Lypiatt's death? Have you ever mentioned it before to anyone?"

"No," said Loochia firmly.

"Is not that rather strange?"

She looked at him reproachfully.

"Why should I speak of what was obviously another woman's secret?"

Admiring glances were her meed for this. Here indeed was a heroine! A woman who could not only keep a secret but hold her tongue about another woman's secret! Such a phenomenon had never been known in Rhodesia.

"Did Lypiatt ask you to keep it secret?"

"He did. But in any case I should have done so," said Loochia, enjoying to the full the rôle of noble friend, especially as it gave her such a priceless opportunity of getting her own back from Desmond. Her only disappointment was that the latter's true identity had not at once been made public, but she still hoped for that. Filgee now took her in hand.

"What motive have you in coming forward to blacken the dead man's memory?" he shot at her suddenly.

"None," replied Loochia, surprised. "Except to help another woman in distress by speaking the truth."

"Hah! You think then that it will assist this titled adventuress in the dock, this peeress who comes masquerading to South Africa in men's clothes — this lady——"

The judge here interrupted.

"I must ask counsel to confine himself to the bare question and not introduce irrelevant matters."

Filgee put up his eyeglass and stared for a moment in impudent surprise, then bowed with mock humility.

"I bow to your Lordship's ruling, but I submit that it appears to me relevant to call the attention of the jury to what we now discover to be the prisoner's real name and history."

"We have discovered nothing of the sort," said the judge unexpectedly. "A theory based upon a strong likeness has suddenly been sprung upon the court, but I am not going to allow that to be dragged in to influence this case except in so far as it can be shown that Lypiatt knew or supposed the prisoner to be a woman when he went to her hut that night."

Filgee was obliged to submit to this decision but he did it sulkily enough, and his agile mind was not long in returning to the same attack by a different route.

"Do you think it will assist the prisoner to have it made clear that Constant Lypiatt visited her at night knowing that she was a woman?" he barked at Mrs. Luff. She looked painfully embarrassed. Patently such an ugly thought had never presented itself to her delicate mind. But what she was really revolving was how best she could use this happy opening. It was more than she had hoped for.

"Of course," she said slowly, "I do not know how soon it was before he told her of his knowledge. But I have an idea . . . there was a certain eagerness in his manner . . . he was deeply impressed by her beauty."

There was an immense sensation in court and O'Byrne leaped to his feet.

"I protest . . . this is outrageous! Are we to stand here and listen to the witness's *ideas*? To follow her studies and impressions? To accept her sensual imaginings——"

It was the judge's turn to protest and to remind him that Mrs. Luff was his own witness. Filgee also began to bellow and storm. In the midst of the heated wrangle as to whether or not the witness should continue her impressions, Loochia solved the problem for them. She was one of those who know the right thing to do at the right moment. Having shot her bolt she had no desire to linger. Besides, she was afraid of Filgee, recognizing in his full black eye an entire disregard for a woman's delicate feelings. So she decided that the best thing to do was to sink very gracefully into a profound faint.

Soon after this diversion the judge cautioned the jury and dismissed them to a night of their own society, at which some of them looked glum enough.

It was a respite for everyone else concerned, but the proceedings had left off at an unfavorable moment for Desmond. Some of the slime thrown by Loochia stuck in men's minds and there was a whole night in which to absorb it, together with the startling revelation of the prisoner's identity. For of course no sooner was the court emptied than the secret came out, and the name of Flavia Desmond, otherwise Countess Tyrecastle, was on every lip. No great effort of memory was required to recall that strange tragedy of three years before. There were some who remembered every detail, for it was one of those dramatic episodes that take hold of the imagination, and even as some grim story of the Australian bush or African black veldt will penetrate to every drawing room and kitchen of the old world, so this society drama had echoed its way to the far places of the earth.

It had been so public yet so secret; bruited throughout the world, it still remained shrouded and mysterious to the end.

From the day Flavia Desmond made her début in society the whole world seemed to have watched her, riding, driving, yachting, fencing, dancing her way through life. Artists had declared her face a classic, her figure a piece of Greek sculpture. She had a sort of valiant, boylike, beautiful bravery and a daring that distinguished her from other girls. Her eyes glowed. She was eager. She excelled in everything—one of those people upon whom the gods seem to shower almost too many gifts. Born to place and power, she achieved distinction for herself by her personality as well as her lineage. Her father, a famous general, had been elevated to the peerage, and her mother, who had died at her birth, had been one of the beauties of Queen Victoria's court. General, Lord Desmond, married again and had more daughters, but none of them could touch Flavia in looks and individuality. The well known fact of her stepmother's antagonism to her made people more tolerant of Flavia's caprices and escapades.

For of course like all young and beautiful creatures she was inclined to be excessive in everything she did—and among the mistakes she made was that of over-loyalty to people unworthy of loyalty, and insolence to people she despised for baseness and ill breeding but who were able to requite her disdain with injurious tales. Stories and scandals clustered about her name. She was the most popular but the most talked of girl in

London. In spite of being unhappy at home she did not marry at once—she might have had anybody, people said, but—people also said—she turned up her nose at everybody. At any rate it was three years after her first coming-out before she bestowed all her gifts and graces and scandals upon one of the great *parties* of the day—Terence, Lord Tyrecastle of Tyre Castle, in the County of Tyrone. Rich, handsome, a noted soldier and sportsman, crack polo player and racing man, he did all the things girls admire men for doing and did them well. True, he was nearly double the age of the bride and had been somewhat of a *viveur*, men said, but they were declared to be madly in love and it was looked upon as an ideal match.

All the world went to the wedding. The bride with her valiant air, full of grace and eagerness, was radiant on her father's arm as some matchless golden rose for whose signal beauty the whole bush had been cultivated. Tyrecastle's fellow officers of a regiment with annals of great glory attended in force. There were many rakes among them, but they were rakes of distinction—and unmarried. One of the regiment's extraordinary boasts was that no officer had ever "stooped" in marriage, or having married ever disgraced its record by public infidelity; and Flavia on that bright day of sunshine, fanfare and fragrance seemed to offer herself as a crown to their boastful arrogance and pride of life.

Every visible sign of worldly weal and happiness was present in St. Margaret's at three o'clock, and at seven the same evening—snap, crack over the wires, sharp as the flash of doom that had ended two lives, came the startling news. It seemed to people they had only just come back from seeing the bridegroom leave the church with his bride on his arm, smiling, insolent with happiness, when the newsboys were shouting the tidings of his death.

"Terrible tragedy at Dover . . . Duel between two officers . . . Death of Lord Tyrecastle and Captain Gerald Sillinger!"

The mystery of that duel in the Dover Hotel had never been solved. Only Flavia could have told why the two men fought to kill in her presence, within four hours of her marriage; and no legal inquisition had been skilled or powerful enough to unseal her lips. All that they ever knew was that within a few minutes of Tyrecastle's arrival Captain Sillinger, just landed from a Channel boat, went to their sitting room. The three had remained shut in together for ten minutes or so; then shots rang out. When servants and guests rushed in it was to discover Sillinger dead, shot through the head by Tyrecastle, and Tyrecastle dying from a self-inflicted wound, the smoking revolver still in his hand. The bride, seated in a chair, was white but calm as a spectator at a play.

She had always been fond of the play, people remembered, especially tragedy, and now she had one all to herself. Some went so far as to say she had arranged it for her own entertainment. There was indeed no end to the mordant things people said as the days went by and no elucidation of the mystery was forthcoming. All that Lady Tyrecastle would state at the inquest was that the two men had quarreled violently about a private matter which she was not at liberty to



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divulge, that each had seized a revolver from a case that lay upon the table and fired at the other. Tyrecastle, having killed Sillinger, had turned his revolver on himself. They were his revolvers, beautiful, deadly little weapons he was taking with him because he and his bride were going to honeymoon in the desert. Only spoiled, capricious Flavia Desmond would have chosen a honeymoon that called for the carrying of loaded arms—and this was what had come of it.

One or two odd details stood out in the grim tale. Sillinger had been a friend of hers from her girlhood up, though like Tyrecastle he was much older than she. Then he went to India with his regiment, and it almost looked as if he rushed home at the news of the engagement, which had been extraordinarily short. As a fact everyone knew that Sillinger had always loved her. Asked at the inquest whether it was true that she had knelt down by Sillinger and tried to staunch his wounds whilst taking absolutely no notice of her dying husband, she coldly admitted it.

The tragedy might have ended there if it had not been for Tyrecastle's people. They were not Irish for nothing, and they did not content them with keening their dead. There were many of them and they came from the Tyrone fastnesses headed by Tyrecastle's eagle-faced old mother. She had been too frail and aged to travel to the wedding. But this was vendetta and the Irish are never too old and frail for that. They were like blood-hounds on the track. Blood had been shed, but they wanted more. It almost seemed as if they wanted the blood of the girl who would not speak. Failing that, they wished to strip her of the title and the fortune Tyrecastle had piled upon her in marriage settlements.

Neither of these desires was possible of attainment without the acquiescence of Flavia. And there the rather sordid side of the story obtruded itself. Flavia would give up nothing. She accepted the abuse and insinuations they heaped upon her at the legal proceedings which followed the inquest, but she would cede nothing. The Tyrecastle tribe fought fiercely, and so did she. The money was hers and she insisted on having it. She did not say so, of course, but she paid lawyers who said it and who wrangled with the Irish like a pack of wolves over a carcass while she sat by, stony and serene. She was alone by then. Her father had died of heart failure when the boys shouted the news of the tragedy in the streets. Her stepmother and young sisters turned their faces from her, and one by one friends dropped away. Those who could forgive her silence could not forgive her greed and the besting of the trembling, fierce old Tyrecastle dam.

So, absolutely alone, she made her fight—and won it. And of course she was absolutely within her rights. Grace, pride, generosity, disdain perhaps might have kept her from taking the money . . . But of these, once her distinguishing qualities, she showed no sign. So she won—and lost all else in the winning. It would have been forgiven in some women . . . but that exquisitely proud,

disdainful Flavia Desmond should sell her birthright for a mess of pottage was beyond pardon. It was as though a goddess with all the fruits and flowers of enchanted worlds at her disposal should come forth and insist upon gobbling up Irish stew. That was how a poet who once had been her devotee put it. And the rest of the world put it in harsher phrase.

"A greedy adventuress," they called her, and "a brazen Jezebel found out in her misdeeds, grabbing all that was left to her—money!"

For needless to say surmise as to the cause of the tragedy was not distinguished by charity—what was first whispered came in time to be cried from the house tops—that Gerry Sillinger had been her lover and Tyrecastle, made aware of it through the former's jealousy, had preferred death to the dishonoring truth. Thus Flavia, Countess Tyrecastle, fell from her high place, and the world that had petted and spoiled her cast her out. Small wonder that she abruptly disappeared. No one knew where she had gone to. Once it was rumored that she was hiding in Paris, living amongst the rowdiest set of artists and students, but those who had known her well disbelieved this of fine and fastidious Flavia.

The years had gone by—and no word of Flavia! Until now . . . news indeed! The wires rang and hummed all that night, not only in South Africa but in Paris, New York and London town.

For Loochia Love-a-little had not been idle. Long before the case came on, in fact from the very day of Lypiatt's amazing Sketch discovery, she had been preparing her secret campaign for vengeance against the "boy" who had rebuffed her amorous advances on the ship and later defeated her plans for the capture of Druro.

The evidence she had given in court of Lypiatt's commanding her silence was true. He had acted on the principle that Desmond's secret might be of use to himself, and she dared not openly disobey a man who held both her and her husband in the palm of his hand. But there was nothing to prevent one so utterly unscrupulous as herself from passing on the information anonymously, and that she had done.

Among her accomplishments was that of scribbling paragraphs for the Cape and Johannesburg papers—snappy little scraps that just escaped being libelous. So it happened that she had plenty of newspaper openings for the batch of clever little sketches she proceeded to compose about "A Celebrated Countess" who lived in Rhodesia not only "incog" but indisguise.

At first she contented herself with mysterious hints; then later she began diligently preparing a narrative of Desmond's life and adventures on the veldt. The day she heard of Lypiatt's death and Desmond's arrest, in fervid delight and freedom from all fear, she brought her work up-to-date, illustrated it with many snapshots, some of Desmond alone, some in company with Druro and others, and gave the full name of the "heroine." A mail left the following day carrying this manuscript, and almost coincident with the trial it was in the hands of the editor of a London paper renowned for its

"scoops." The case, already immensely talked about on account of the accused being a woman in disguise, became through Loochia's story the sensation of the moment.

Nothing was omitted from her narratives, which began on the Glenconnor Castle and ended at the Jubilate Deo; and all the malice of a petty nature had been uncorked to the labor of hate. The unadoring Eric on reading it—for like all artists Loochia could not refrain from trying her work on someone—was moved to epigram.

"When dog eats dog there's something doing," quoth he. "But when cat eats cat hell's to pay."

As for the subject of the monograph, there was little rest or repose in her white-washed cell that night. Not that she was aware of the full extent of Loochia's betrayal, nor of the revelation of her past with which the wires were humming. But enough had been told for her to realize that even if the best happened and she got free, her career as young Desmond, her loved life of the veldt was finished and past. The fact was so bitter and doomful that she thought she would not very much care if the law decided to take her life. She had from the first been willing to face the contingency of that for Druro's sake. What she had *not* counted on was the exhumation of the old tragedy—those sad bones that had been moldering in the grave for years and were now dragged forth into the highway for all the world to gape at. The name and title she had cast to the winds were back on her shoulders, branded there like marks of shame, stuck there with the gouts of mud the world had flung.

And there was another thing. Druro's evidence. What did that mean? Her heart turned sick, there was dust in her mouth. Was nothing and no one, then, worth love and sacrifice? Was nothing that was human, fine? Was there no beauty except in the inanimate things of nature—trees, flowers, hill and skies? Were all the rest just shallow mockeries? Words, words—words to cover up the baseness or at best the emptiness of the human soul? Sacrifice, self-immolation were great and wonderful privileges in the service of love. But if the object of them were unworthy and afraid, with a base, cowardly fear? Then indeed sacrifice was not great. It was dust and ashes. It was defeat.

These were some of the thoughts that kept her company through the night while she paced her cell or stood long at the window looking through the bars at the peace of Africa which seemed almost as the peace past human understanding. A great white moon rode glorious in the sky so bright that not a star could be seen. The land was full of a mysterious ghostly light, as though only for spirits to move in. All human beings had hidden themselves in their homes and beds. Even the insects were still, for they prefer darkness in which to utter their shrill calls of love. The fantastic euphorbia trees with their air of magic stood like ebony sentinels before the jail, stretching twisted arms to the sky as if in worship or despair.

The Old Boy

(Continued from page 51)

with the wolf hound! And that little pair of flappers—what? It's good to be alive!"

He'd always treated me in a friendly but very reserved way. There was a big gulf between his station and mine and he'd never done anything calculated to make me forget it. But this morning he acted familiar and chummy, as if we'd been the same age. He dug me suddenly in the ribs and said:

"How'd you like to be a Turk, old top?"

V

HE WAS altogether changed. And he wasn't changed for the better. He was like some wild, moneyed boy just out of college, and nothing tired him. He discovered Broadway and never got home till two or three o'clock in the morning.

I never saw such energy, such keenness, such curiosity and such enterprise. But he scattered the energy, wasted it and squandered it. He'd start some tremendous business deal, and in the midst of it he'd tire of it and start something different.

At times he seemed to forget all about Miss Pembroke, and then he'd remember her and write her lots of letters and send her pearls and diamonds. But she'd stopped being the only woman in his thoughts.

Still, when it got to be time for Palm Beach he was keen to go. And when he got to Palm Beach and could actually see her again and be with her, he went quite as crazy over her as ever. And he wanted to marry her then and there.

But something saved her from that—just the natural stubbornness of a girl who's happy enough the way things are and doesn't propose to be hustled into anything. And the old man had to put up with that; but he didn't like it. He sulked about it and acted spoiled. And then he'd forget that he had anything to sulk about and would simply blaze and crackle with energy and enthusiasm.

Nothing tired him—except work and concentrating his mind. Whatever he'd gained in bodily health and stamina he'd lost between the ears. His memory got worse and worse. And he knew it. He told me so frankly.

"I'm getting to be a regular scatter-brain," he said. "For Heaven's sake watch over me closely and don't let me forget too many engagements and promises."

He began to get himself talked about. But it was lucky that he wasn't living at the hotel but in his own house; so that some of the most eccentric things he did never got out.

One night, for instance, I heard a tapping on one of my windows. I got out of bed and went to see what it was. It was the old man's ten toes.

He was making a circuit of the house hanging to the gutter by his hands. No, not drunk. Asleep. Nearly every night now he walked in his sleep. But I ought not to say that he walked. He climbed.

You didn't dare wake him. All you dared do was watch him—and pray.

It got so bad that I telegraphed the doctor. I telegraphed in such a way that he jumped on to the first train. I met him



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at the station and told him all the awful things that were going on, and that I didn't know how to cope with them. The doctor seemed to be terribly shocked and frightened. He said "My God . . . My God . . ." And then he made a clean breast of the whole rotten unnatural business. "We had a young fellow—Smith—all signed up and paid up. At the last minute he lost his nerve and cut and ran . . . Sooner than disappoint the old man . . . Well, you know . . ."

"The thing that was under the sheet in the next room?"

"You looked?"

I nodded.

"What's to be done, doctor? He'll break his neck."

"Any other symptoms but climbing?"

I had to smile; the other symptoms seemed so petty and foolish.

"He comes home from the beach with his pockets full of bright-colored shells. He has hundreds of them in his room—all over the place; and he's got a craze for coconut milk, has it served at all his meals instead of water—awful stuff."

"How about Miss Pembroke?" asked the doctor.

"He wanted to marry her right off; but she wouldn't. And lately it's seemed to me as if she was afraid of him . . ."

I took the doctor straight to the club house because I knew Miss Pembroke and the old man would be playing roulette after their morning swim, and I wanted

the doctor to have a good look at the old man without being seen himself.

He gave one look and turned white.

"Good God!" he whispered. "Doesn't everybody see what has happened? It's as plain as day."

And it was. I had a moment of clear vision and it was perfectly obvious that among the men about the roulette table there was one that wasn't a man.

But the effect lasted only a moment and left me blinking. After that my employer looked natural enough—only preposterously young and alive.

When he heard that the doctor was in Palm Beach he insisted on having him come to the house to stay. I was glad of that. The doctor might be able to do something—to undo what he'd done. I was powerless, and the responsibility was too heavy for me.

The doctor studied the situation for two days. On the third day it came out that Miss Pembroke, without saying a word to anyone, had slipped away from Palm Beach on a north-bound train.

I never knew just what had happened. If the old man knew the chances are that five minutes later he'd forgotten. But when he found out that she had gone he went into a terrible frenzy of rage.

He rushed up the stairs to his room and we could hear him screaming and breaking things.

The doctor may have been a bad man and a fool, but he was brave. He went

upstairs and I heard the sound of the old man's door opening and closing. I don't know what the doctor said to him—that is, I don't know exactly. What puzzles me more is how he managed to get his attention so that he could talk to him at all. But he did. And all the awful noises stopped.

By and by they came downstairs together. The old man seemed to be under a terrible mental strain, but he was quiet and natural. His eyes were pathetic, though. I never saw an expression of such horror and misery.

He made a splendid fight to be himself—to be what he was meant to be. But the strain told and deep lines came into his face.

"I had to tell him," the doctor told me. "It was the only way. I had to tell him about—Smith—and he's enough of a man still to make a fight for—yes, for his liberty. And of course he has horror and disgust on his side to fight for him."

God knows he had, but they weren't strong enough. It was in his sleep that the evil forces got the better of him.

I suppose we ought to have kept better watch; but he'd been so quiet and reasonable for nearly a week that he caught us off our guard.

We found him lying at the foot of one of the tall palm trees back of the house. His neck was broken, and his right hand was still clutching the green coconut for which he had grown thirsty in the night.

When a peaceable old fellow is put upon by his women folks he's got to avenge himself somehow. Read "The Revolt of Campion" by Gouverneur Morris in February COSMOPOLITAN.

The Desert Healer

(Continued from page 34)

It was nothing new to Carew—use had accustomed him to even greater squalor than this—but Gerardine's disgust was evident as he stared about him with curling lip, spitting the sand from his mouth and shaking it from his clothing.

Wet and angry, and in no mood to be further inconvenienced, the sight of the horses vigorously propelled into the hut through the narrow entrance moved him to noisy expostulation. But Carew, who was stooping to unloosen Suliman's girths, waved an indifferent hand towards the door and intimated sharply that if he preferred the sandstorm he was at liberty to remove himself, but that as far as he—Carew—was concerned men and horses remained where they were until the weather conditions improved.

Unused to opposition, and too selfish to think of anything but his own comfort, the flat refusal was all that was needed to stir Gerardine's smoldering rage to a white heat of fury. An ugly look swept across his lowering face and he started forward with a threatening gesture. For a few seconds it seemed as if the open quarrel Carew had feared was now inevitable. Tired and on edge, goaded by the other's insolence and overbearing manner, driven by his own hatred, nothing would have given him greater pleasure than to respond to the provocation offered him.

The atmosphere of the little room seemed suddenly to become electric—alive with naked passions—as the two men stared into each other's eyes. Behind them the

Arabs, sensitive of the tension, were watching intently, and Hoscin was edging nearer to his master, his hand stealing to the knife in his belt. Then with a tremendous effort Carew thrust from him the temptation to which he had almost succumbed and swinging on his heel without a word turned back to his horse. Checked despite himself by a silence he did not understand, Gerardine made no further protest but fell back with an inarticulate growl and crossing the room dropped down heavily on the cleanest spot he could find, as far removed from the others as possible.

Lighting a cigar with difficulty, for his matches were wet, he smoked sulkily until the horses were unsaddled. Then fumbling in the pocket of his sodden coat he produced a good sized flask and, gulping down the remaining contents, shouted to the sullen faced Arab—who was leaning moodily against the wall beside the steaming horses—to bring him more brandy. Apathetically the man unstrapped the leatherholster from his master's saddle. Following him, Carew saw the savage kick aimed at him as Gerardine snatched the second flask from his outstretched hand.

With growing hatred and disgust Carew listened to the uninterrupted flow of evil language. Was this what the girl heard day after day and night after night? He flung his wet cloak back with an angry jerk, scowling at the sudden thought. It was no business of his, no business of his, he whispered doggedly as he searched for a cigarette. No business of his—but re-

membrance, stimulated, was easier than forgetfulness and for long he stared somberly at the wreathing clouds of faint blue smoke that, curling upward in fantastic spirals, seemed to frame the exquisite oval of a pale, pure face.

When at last, by sheer strength of will, he forced his mind back to the immediate present, Gerardine's grumbling had ceased and he seemed to be asleep. The men too were dozing. Carew wondered if he also had been asleep. Listening for the gusts of wind that before had shaken the crumbling building, he realized that the storm had passed. The atmosphere was stifling, and going to the door he wrenched it open and went out into the night.

There the change was almost magical. Swept clean, the heavens were blazing with stars and the desert lay calm and still in the soft clear light of a rising moon whose slanting beams shone silver on the sand. A peace and silence that was gripping. To Carew, still seething with the hatred that a little while since had almost mastered him, the marvelous beauty of the night was like the touch of a healing hand. Watching it, for a time he forgot even Gerardine.

Behind him the tiny collection of huts straggled dark and mysterious in the deep shadow of a great bare rock. But he did not look at the sleeping village. It was the desert that held him—the desert that with its silent voice was whispering, enticing, as so often it had whispered and enticed before, drawing him with the glamor of its hidden secrets. Caressingly



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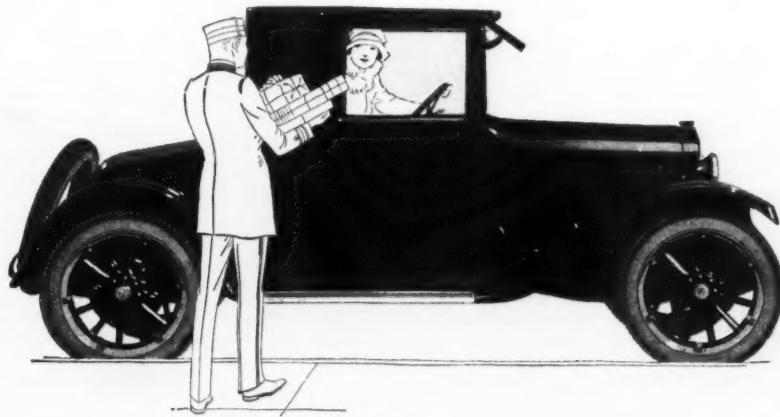
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his eyes swept the moonlit plain. He was one with it now, a nomad for all time. More than the stately house in England, more than the miniature palace in Algiers, it was his home. For ten years he had lived in it. For ten years, seeking to cure his own hurt, he had tried to bring relief to others, fighting misery and disease, appalled by the magnitude of his task and seeming to have accomplished so little. But even the little was worth while. By even the little he was repaid. His toil had not been altogether in vain. By God's grace he had been enabled to do something, and by God's grace he would do still more. In the deep stillness of the eastern night the sense of the Divine Presence was very near, and in all humbleness Carew prayed from his heart for strength to continue the work that had become his life.

As he rose from his knees Hosein came to him, uneasy at his absence and the unwilling bearer of a message.

"The English lord is hungry," he announced briefly.

With a last glance at the shining stars Carew went reluctantly back to the hut.

Half hidden in a haze of cigar smoke and aggressively wide awake, Geradine hailed his appearance with no more civility than before.

"Clear out those cursed beasts," he shouted truculently. "I can't sleep in a damned stable! And get me something to eat. Something—to—eat. *Quelque chose à manger, comprenez?* You blasted fool!" he added, pantomiming vigorously.

The blood rolled in a dark wave to Carew's face but determined to keep his temper he swallowed the retort that sprang to his lips and gave the required orders with apparent unconcern. But he smiled inwardly as he watched the men lead the horses away. It was very doubtful whether food of any kind would be procurable at this time of night, and even if Hosein's endeavors met with success it was not likely that Geradine would appreciate the rough fare of the necessitous little village.

And when at length Hosein returned with a bowl of curdled camel's milk he was not surprised that the viscount after one glance of mingled dismay and repugnance, rejected both it and the unsavory looking little mass of sand-covered fruit with a disgusted "Lord, what beastly muck!" and retired into his corner with his hunger unsatisfied to curse himself to sleep. He was still sleeping heavily when Carew woke with the dawn and went out to find Hosein and the horses and make arrangements for Geradine's return to Biskra. It was not his intention that they should ride together.

To escape the leave-taking that was otherwise unavoidable he did not go back to the hut when, an hour later, he was ready for the road and had concluded his interview with Malec and the headman of the village.

But as his foot was in the stirrup Geradine appeared, yawning sleepily and swinging his arms to get the stiffness out of them. Having wakened for once without his customary morning headache, he was in a better temper than usual. Apparently oblivious of his incivility of the previous evening he lounged forward with an air of condescending geniality, prepared evidently to make himself agreeable. His shouted greeting terminated in a loud laugh as he glanced at Carew, clean shaven

and immaculate as Hosein always contrived he should be, and then at his own soiled clothing.

"You look smart enough, by gad," he said, fingering his rough chin tenderly. "Where the devil do you find water and a razor in this filthy little hole? You're off early—what's your hurry? Oh, damn it, I forgot you can't speak English! Well, never mind, you're a sportsman whatever you are. I'd have been in the soup last night if you hadn't come along. Many thanks—dash it, I mean *très obligé, mille remerciements*—and all the rest of it, don't you know." And with another laugh he thrust out his hand.

But incited by the gentle pressure of his rider's heel Suliman plunged wildly and shot away, leaving Geradine with his arm still outstretched, half annoyed and half amused at Carew's abrupt departure.

Proud as Lucifer, like every other potty little chief he had ever met—but the beggar could ride, he reflected as he stood looking after the galloping horseman; and the man he had with him was worth a dozen of the fool he was landed with. And yawning again he turned back to the hut and roared for the fool in question.

CHAPTER VIII

IN HER bedroom at the Villa des Ombres, Marny Geradine was standing before the open window staring out into the darkness. She stood very still, her colorless face set like a mask of marble, her hands clasped tightly behind her. Only the tempestuous rise and fall of her delicately rounded bosom betrayed the inward tumult that was raging within her. Five minutes ago she had dismissed a white faced and pleading Ann and now, alone, she was facing a decision that took all her courage to sustain.

It was the night of the Governor's annual ball. By now she should have been dressed. But the wonderful Paris creation that Geradine had insisted on ordering specially for the occasion still lay in shimmering folds on the chaise longue and Marny had not changed from the simple tea gown in which she had dined.

She was not going to the ball. She was not going to submit again to the open shame and humiliation that had been her portion throughout her married life but which during the last few weeks had reached a culminating point of horror. Her husband's gross intemperance, his notorious infidelities, his callous disregard for anything beyond his own pleasure, had driven her at last to rebellion. She had reached the end of her endurance. She knew that at home she must continue to suffer the brutal treatment he meted out to her, but she had resolved never to appear in public with him again. How would he receive her decision? How would she brave his anger? A shudder of pure terror ran through her. If he would only come—as she knew he would come—to demand the reason of her lateness. Waiting was torture.

And yet when the door burst open and banged violently to again and she heard his heavy step behind her, the dread she had felt before was as nothing to the paralyzing fear that now rushed over her, robbing her of all power of movement.

She could have shrieked when his hands closed with crushing force on her shoulders

and he swung her round to face him. But she managed to control herself and meet his furious stare courageously. He was in the quarrelsome stage of semi-intoxication that of late had been his usual state, drunk enough to be cruel and vindictive, sober enough to be dangerous.

"Not dressed yet! What the hell have you been doing all this time? You're damnable late!"

She was used to being sworn at; she had come to feel that nothing he could say could hurt her any more; and tonight it did not seem to matter very much what he said.

She forced herself to answer him.

"I'm not going to the ball, Clyde."

He glared at her in speechless anger.

"The devil you're not! And why, might I ask?" he bellowed furiously.

Panic-driven, the temptation to evade the issue she had raised, the cowardly impulse to plead illness to allay his wrath, was almost more than she could suppress. But she fought back the words that rushed to her lips and turned away with a little hopeless gesture.

"You know why," she said in a low voice.

"I'm damned if I do!"

She turned to him swiftly.

"You do know, Clyde," she said steadily. "You know perfectly well why I dread going out with you. You've known ever since we were married."

"I know you're a little fool," he retorted angrily. "Look here, Marny, I've had enough of this nonsense. You'll go to this damn ball whether you like it or not, just as you will go anywhere and everywhere I choose you shall go. I'll give you ten minutes to be ready—not a second more. And you can keep your infernal objections to yourself in future. I'm not going to be preached at by anybody, much less by you. Look sharp and don't keep me waiting any longer. Ten minutes—that's your limit," he shouted and moved as if to leave the room.

She shivered, her pale face whiter than before, but her determination was stronger than her fear.

"It's no use, Clyde. I'm not going," she said slowly. And for the first time he heard a ring of obstinacy in her voice.

He swung back towards her, staring at her for a moment incredulously, rocking slightly on his feet, his big hands clutching as he worked himself up to a pitch of passionate rage.

"You mean that?" he said quickly. Her dry lips almost refused their office.

"Yes," she whispered faintly.

"You deliberately disobey me?"

She wrung her hands in sudden agony. "I've always obeyed you, always done what you wished. But this—oh, I can't!"

He towered over her, his bloodshot eyes menacing. "You can't?" he sneered. "I rather think you both can and will. There's only one person in this house who says 'can't'—and that's me. You'll do what you're told, now and always. Put on that dress—and God help you if you keep me waiting!"

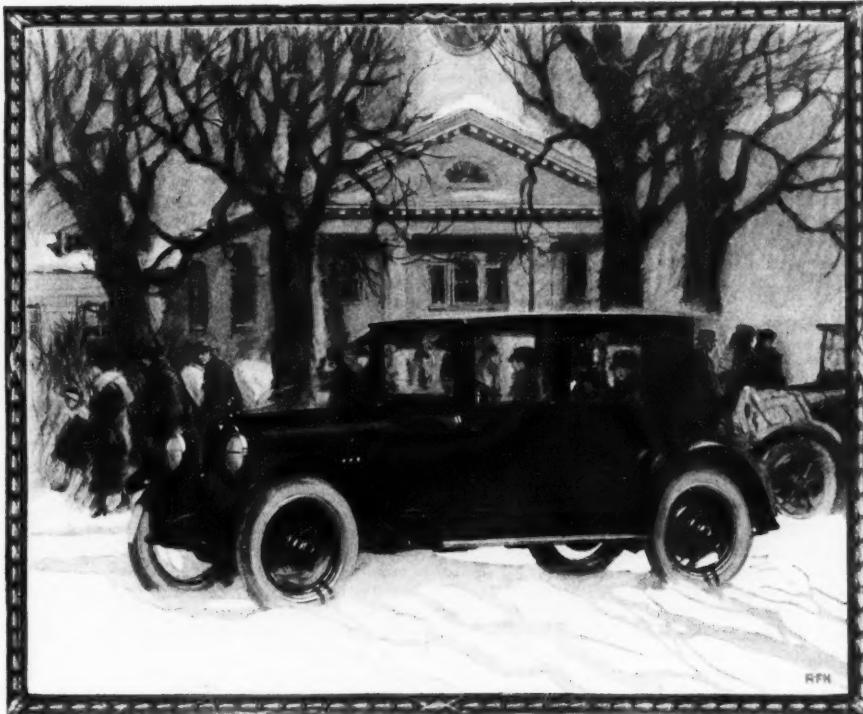
She lifted a quivering face of appeal.

"Clyde—I—Clyde!" Her voice broke in a cry of terrible anguish as he struck her, the whole weight of his powerful body behind the smashing blow that sent her reeling across the room to fall with a crash on the parquet floor.

He looked down at her callously, his crimson face twitching, his big frame

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on the Famous Super-Six Chassis



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(5150)

HUDSON MOTOR CAR COMPANY, DETROIT, MICHIGAN

shaking with passion. Then he walked slowly across the room and sat down heavily on the bed, his smoldering eyes still fixed with a look of cruel satisfaction on the prostrate little figure that lay so still. He had no compunction for what he had done. She was his—and if she had not yet learned who was master it was time she learned it now, once and for all.

She stirred at last, moaning with pain, her slender body convulsed with terrible shuddering. Dragging herself to her feet she stood swaying giddily, her hands pressed on her throbbing temple, her heavy eyes looking listlessly about her till they rested at length on Geradine's massive figure, and into them there flashed suddenly the horror of dawning remembrance. With a little choking sound she turned and staggering a few steps fell into a chair before the dressing table, burying her head in her arms amongst the costly appointments that littered its shining surface, her shoulders shaking with hard, tearless sobs.

And as Geradine had watched her insensible, so did he watch her now, pitiless and unmoved. He had no use for half measures. If she had to be taught a lesson it should be at least a thorough one. He lurched to his feet and strode across the room.

"How much longer are you going to keep me waiting?"

The harsh words jarred like a stab of actual pain, and sick and faint she raised her eyes to his. One look convinced her of his determination. He meant it, oh, very well she knew he meant it! Too dazed, too broken to oppose him further, she knew that she would have to obey. With a stifled gasp of pain she struggled to her feet, her head reeling, and caught at the table for support, pushing the heavy hair off her forehead and wincing as her fingers touched her injured temple.

"If you will please go I will ring for my maid," she muttered indistinctly, choking back the sobs that rose in her throat.

"I'll go when it suits me, and you'll ring for no maid," he said sharply. "You'll dress a damn sight quicker with me in the room. It won't be the first time I've valeted you, and it won't be the last, I'm willing to bet. And I'm hanged if I'll have that grim faced old harridan you call your maid poking her nose in where she isn't wanted. I'm about fed up with her as it is. She's not the kind of woman I want about you, anyhow. She'll have to go, and the sooner the better. You can pay her her wages tomorrow and tell her to clear out by the first available boat."

"Clyde!" The sharp cry was wrung from her. And forgetting her pain, her fear, everything but the heartless ultimatum he had launched at her, she sprang towards him, clutching at him with trembling hands, her face working convulsively, pleading as she would not have stooped to plead for herself.

"Clyde, Clyde, you don't mean it, you can't mean it! You can't send her away, you couldn't be so cruel. She's old, I'm all she's got, it would kill her to leave me. And you promised—you promised me faithfully I might keep her. I know it's only to punish me—but don't punish me through her. It will break her heart. Oh, Clyde, be generous! Do what I ask, just this once. If you let me keep her I'll never oppose you again. I'll do anything you wish—I'll be anything you wish—"

A sneering look of triumph crossed his face as he flung her from him. "You'll do as I wish without any bargains, my lady," he said significantly. "You've had your orders and there's an end of the matter. The thing's finished. And might I remind you that the horses have already been waiting an hour?"

That was apparently all that mattered to him. Of less value at the moment than the pedigreed animals he prized, her distress of mind, the pain and weariness of her bruised and aching body, were beyond his consideration. A feeling of numbness came over her, a kind of frozen apathy that seemed to turn her into a mere automaton, and without a word she turned slowly to do his bidding. She had a curious impression that the white-faced, weary looking woman reflected in her mirror was some other than herself, that, divorced from her own body she was watching the suffering of a total stranger. And as she dressed with mechanical haste only one thing was clear and instant with her—the consciousness of menacing eyes that followed her every movement until their burning stare became a veritable torment. But throughout the process of her toilet he spoke only once, a characteristic remark:

"Put a bit o' color on your face. You're as white as a ghost."

"I haven't any," she faltered.

"Haven't—any? Good God!" he ejaculated and relapsed into silence.

But when she was dressed he came to her, and as his critical gaze traveled slowly over her slim figure the heavy scowl smoothed from his face and the old look of proprietary admiration crept back into his eyes. With the quick change of mood that was so marked in him he caught her in his arms with sudden passion.

"Damn it all, Marny, what the devil do you want to make me lose my temper for?" he grumbled petulantly. "Give me a kiss, and don't be such a little fool again."

Sick with loathing but helpless against his strength, perforce she lifted her face to his. But unsatisfied, he laughed with angry contempt. "Do you call that a kiss? Gad, you've a lot to learn!" he said scornfully, and crushed his mouth once more against her trembling lips. Then he let her go and, swelling with the sense of his own magnanimity, hurried her with heavy jocularity to the waiting carriage, there to soothe his ruffled feelings with a cigar which he smoked in silence during the short drive into Algiers.

And huddled in her own corner of the roomy victoria, Marny leaned back and rested her aching head against the cushions, staring before her with fixed unseeing eyes.

During the five years that had been a physical as well as mental martyrdom she had suffered much at her husband's hands. In the furious rages to which he was liable he had often hurt her cruelly, but until tonight he had never deliberately struck her. But it was not of his brutality towards herself that Geradine's wife was thinking now as the carriage rolled swiftly along the deserted road. Her mind was filled with only one thought. Ann! How to tell her. How to break to the faithful old woman the fact that her lifelong service must end so abruptly, so callously.

Her husband's impatient voice roused her to the fact that the carriage was at a standstill. Tonight, the gala night of the

year, the Governor's palace was filled to overflowing, a scene of vivid animation, gorgeous with oriental splendor, rioting with color and echoing with a confusion of voices laughing and chattering in a score of different languages. The spacious rooms, flaming with lights and decorated with a wealth of scented flowers, were crowded—a motley gathering of nearly every race and creed moving in a never-ceasing stream to the strains of the crashing military band.

The gaudy costumes of the desert sheiks, the crimson burnouses of the grave faced Caids, the striking and picturesque uniforms of Spahis and Zouaves, made distinctive notes in the brilliant assembly that eclipsed even the radiant hues of the marvelous toilettes of the French and English ladies.

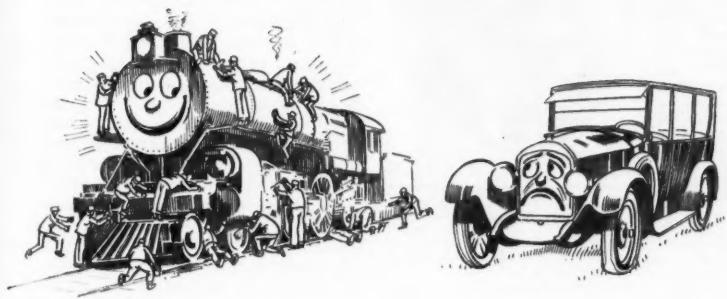
There were many curious glances that followed and many eager tongues that discussed the tardy appearance of the two important English guests as they made their slow passage across the room, and the Governor, whose twinkling eyes were roving constantly in quest of new faces, was quick to notice their arrival. Punctilious to a nicety, he stepped forward to greet them with a deference that was due to Geradine's rank and to the beauty of his wife. But as she responded to his gallant and happy little speech of welcome Marny's voice faltered slightly and her pale face flushed with a wave of beautiful color; for near her in a little group of desert men beside the Governor's dais she saw Carew standing, clad like them in native robes but distinguished by the dark blue burnous he affected. And Geradine, whose French was as limited as was the Governor's English, while replying somewhat laboriously to his host's courtesies, had also noticed the tall Arab-clad figure and grasped eagerly at the chance of cutting short a conversation that bored him infinitely.

"I'm hanged if that isn't my friend of the sandstorm," he exclaimed, and waved pointedly at Carew who, unwilling to add to the public attention already aroused, came forward reluctantly and submitted to a boisterous greeting. With a loud laugh Geradine turned again to the visibly astonished Governor.

"Seems a decent sort of chap," he said condescendingly. "Pulled me out of no end of a hole in the desert a week or two ago. Introduce him to my wife, will you? She's interested in the natives. And Marny," he added, his own slight interest already evaporating, "you speak the lingo better than I do, say something civil to the fellow—only for heaven's sake remember he's a Mohammedan and don't put your foot into it and inquire for his wife and family. And when you're tired of him His Excellency will find you partners if you want to dance. I'm off to get a drink." And with a careless nod he swung on his horse in search of the nearest buffet.

His graceless incivility was no more than much that Marny had been called upon frequently to endure, but tonight his boorishness was almost more than she could bear. His mistake with regard to Carew though regrettable was a perfectly natural one, but his cavalier treatment of the courteous little Frenchman was unpardonable. Scarlet with shame and confusion, she could find no words to break

The Engine Gets It Your Car Deserves It



THE Twentieth Century Limited had stopped at Albany. An important executive of an automobile company got off the train with two friends for a stroll along the platform.

As they passed the engine he called attention to the crew of seven men which was giving a thorough inspection to all the important working parts, to be sure they were in condition to make the remainder of the run.

"That engine," he said, "has run only 146 miles. And just look what a careful inspection she's getting. Yet an automobile owner will drive his car for thousands of miles—not on a smooth steel track either—without giving it any attention at all."

"Then, if anything goes wrong, he blames the manufacturer and talks freely among his friends about 'that piece of junk.'"

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Don't wait for faults to develop in your car. Your dealer has a station where it can be inspected regularly. The old motto, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," applies to automobiles as well as everything else.

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- No. 6—Your Storage Battery.
- No. 7—Brakes and Brake Relining.
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the awkward silence that ensued. But the Governor, whose saving sense of humor was fortunately greater than his feeling of mortification, plunged nobly into the breach and made the best of the embarrassing situation in which he found himself.

"Madame," he stammered, with twitching lips, "I—I have the honor to present to you Monsieur Carew—a compatriot of your own," and fled to hide his secret enjoyment of a contretemps he found exquisitely amusing. Carew the woman hater—and he had just introduced him to the most beautiful woman in Algiers. *Bon Dieu, quelle comédie!*

But to Marry it was no comedy. Miserable and tongue-tied, giddy with pain, she tried vainly to collect herself, to formulate some adequate excuse that should cover her husband's blunder and lessen the resentment she was sure the man beside her must feel at being publicly forced into an action that was totally against his universally known principles. Would he blame her for being the cause, though the unwitting cause, of his present predicament? Would he too leave her in this crowded room, the cynosure of curious eyes, to find her way alone to the group of English dowagers with whom she had the slightest acquaintance? Super-sensitive and innately shy, the very thought of it made her shrink.

The few seconds that had passed since the Governor's hurried departure seemed magnified into hours. Angry at her own gaucherie, she had nervously to make some halting apology when the opening bars of a waltz rising above the din of conversation occasioned a general rush for partners and in the comparative quiet that followed she heard the deep soft voice that had become so dear to her speaking with the slow hesitancy she had noticed before.

"You are looking very tired, Lady Geradine. Shall I take you out of this babel?"

And almost before she realized it she found herself walking beside him down the length of the long room, piloted skillfully between the dancing couples who already filled the floor. Once or twice he paused to exchange a nod and a passing word with a uniformed officer or an isolated group of Arabs, but she hardly noticed these slight interruptions; and at length they reached the rapidly emptying entrance hall. Crossing it, he turned down a short corridor that opened into a little winter garden where chairs were placed amongst palms and banks of tropical plants. At the moment the place was deserted. And quiet and dimly lighted, to Marry it seemed a haven of refuge after the glare and noise of the crowded reception rooms. With a feeling of relief she followed him to a fern-screened couch at the farther end of the conservatory and sank into the low seat, stripping the long gloves from her hands and closing her eyes wearily. Looking down at her, Carew saw her face convulsed with a sudden spasm of pain.

In a scene more powerful and dramatic than any in "The Sheik," Marry and El Hakim and Geradine cast the die of destiny. See February COSMOPOLITAN on sale at all news stands January 10.

The Return of the Tide

(Continued from page 99)

"For Heaven's sake!" Josie exclaimed, turning from one face to another in distress. "That doesn't sound like me! Is she as blue as all that?"

"Oh my!" Annie and Ida and Mary all ejaculated together, shaking their heads in mournful triumph. "You wouldn't know her, Jo. She's just—well, she's a different woman!"

Josie made no answer in words, but her eyes watered with a sort of angry and incredulous pain. The girls were exaggerating, she thought resentfully. She had come from her trim little home, her nicely managed little establishment, with its clean Danish girl in the kitchen and its delightful order and prosperity, and everything here in the old environment looked shabby, shiftless, unnecessarily ugly to her.

After the first flush of meeting Annie, she had noted the general poverty and plainness of Annie's house and the worn, patient courage of Annie's soul and body. She had at once suspected Annie's secret, and the fact itself annoyed her, as well as the fact that Annie did not tell her about it. Another baby! Jo thought despairingly, her intolerance springing from sheer affection for and loyalty to Annie, and yet hurting Annie far more than mere indifference would have done.

Then Jim hurt her, too, for Josie adored her only brother, and the thought that this wretched attempt at merrymaking tomorrow was to be made without him cut her to the heart. No, he said quietly to her coaxing, he'd a little rather not try it tomorrow. They weren't to worry about him, they weren't to think about him at all. He'd be all right.

To put a final touch upon Josie's discouragement, young Marty, who had been visiting her, developed a thick, painful throat this evening. If Marty had mumps, then of course Rose Agnes would have mumps! And probably the whole Curley nursery would catch them, and perhaps poor Ida, who never had had them, and who was in no condition to fight any illness. Josie wished heartily that they had never attempted this ridiculous party!

John and Frank and Jim and Danny, warned not to go near ma, went out after dinner to see old friends in the neighborhood. But the women sat about in Annie's crowded parlor, putting the finishing touches to Christmas dolls and beribboned doilies, and talking, in continually sinking and saddening voices, of family matters. And Josie was conscious only of a desire to scream at them all that they were a helpless, stupid, fearful lot, and then grab her baby and rush back to her own home, where women read the backs of the magazines and men were not afraid of losing jobs. Frank Curley had nothing to be afraid of—he was a master mechanic, after all, and there were other iron works in the world. To have Annie, who had been so pretty and so neat, sighing here and wiping her eyes and biting threads—

Marty, asleep upon a lounge, woke up fretful. His throat hurt. The women looked at each other, appalled.

"Try him on a teaspoonful of vinegar, Jo!" Annie whispered as they threaded



Good News That millions of women tell

Millions of women, all the world over, have found a way to prettier teeth. Since dental advice, some by this ten-day test.

They have spread the news to others. Now wherever you look you see glistening teeth, and more smiles to show them.

We urge you again to accept this test and prove to yourself what they know.

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That viscous film you feel on teeth must be combated daily. Otherwise it clings, enters crevices and stays. It forms the basis of cloudy coats, including tartar.

It also holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth to cause decay. Germs breed by millions in it. They, with tartar, are the chief cause of pyorrhea.

Thus most tooth troubles are now traced to film, and very few escape them.

Why it remains

The tooth brush and the ordinary tooth paste cannot effectively combat it. So nearly everybody, however careful, had teeth discolored and decay.

Dental science has for years tried to combat this condition. Two ways have now been found. Able authorities have proved them, and leading dentists now urge their daily use.

A new-type tooth paste has been perfected, called Pepsodent. It corrects some old mistakes. These two great film combatants are embodied in it for daily application.

It does far more

Pepsodent does more than that. It multiplies the starch digestant in the saliva. That is there to digest starch deposits which may otherwise cling and form acids.

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It omits soap and chalk, which now are known to bring undesired effects.

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their way between the filled beds in the dark bedroom. "My goodness, I wish we could ask ma!"

They were to reach ma's just at noon the next day; by eleven o'clock they were all tired to the breaking point. Annie had dragged herself to early mass, sick and dizzy; had come back to roast turkey and boil potatoes even while every fiber of her being was in revolt at the mere smell of food. She spoke to the children gently, screamed at them, and spoke gently and apologetically again. Frank did his best, buttoning clean rompers wrongly and misunderstanding directions.

Through a sweet, clean Christmas noon, of dazzling snow and bright sunshine, with bells ringing and holiday joy abroad in every red-painted coaster and consciously worn fur collar, they presently trooped to the old house. By this time the children were in wild spirits, and John and Dan laughing together, and even to Annie's lifeless cheek an unwonted happy flush had sprung.

The gate creaked; they were up the path, they were at the door. How well they knew the rubbed dirty space about the bell, and the penciled "Roslyn 369" that some impatient messenger had scrawled there!

A long delay; then ma at last, with an amazed, almost truculent look in her handsome face, and one big foot bare. She had been soaking her foot in a bucket of warm water; she looked as if her privacy had been somewhat outraged.

"Well, whatever!" she said dryly. "I thought I was to go to Annie! And you're down, Josie? Forevermore! Take his cap off, Frank, for the Lord's sake, the way he won't have his ribbons all chewed to nothing on you! It's a wonder you wouldn't let a body know—I've a taste of stew in the ice box, and that's all!"

Even their greetings, their resolute laughter and comment, could not quite carry it, could not make the ensuing hours a success. Even when the kitchen stove and the stove in the parlor were roaring hot, and the presents had been given, and the table enlarged and set, and the cranberry sauce divided into glass saucers, there was a consciousness of something forced in their hilarity and something missing to their felicity.

The women chattered courageously; ma wasn't to do anything, but they did everything gaily as they moved to and fro. Annie's face blazed, she looked her pretty self again with her red cheeks and shining eyes; she had pinned on a great, stiff white apron, and put a cluster of red berries into her lifeless, meekly looped hair. Mary was irresistible, and Josie merry and affectionate and full of stories and gossip that were new. Ida sat near her mother-in-law, a little breathless and more than a little apprehensive. She kept running over the months upon nervous finger tips; June to February came out nine, over and over, and yet she did have a queerish feeling that was not quite unfamiliar, nor insignificant!

The men helped clumsily, eagerly, or stood about large and awkward, smoking. Any little topic of conversation that they could keep moving they followed with passionate seriousness. Also they spoke frequently to the children, who were beginning to feel restless and hungry, as the clock struck two.

It was ma who was responsible for all this discomfort. Ma, who in old times had been the animated, garrulous, loving, dictatorial heart of all their groups, was oddly changed and aged today. She received them magisterially, with a certain aloof dignity. She watched them, she listened, she considered her answers. There was a stiffness, a sort of tacit disapproval in her manner that made them all uneasy.

This had been home to her three girls, once. But nobody felt at home today. The irresistible currents of life had drawn them away, one by one, and they were alien here. The depth and passion of their mother's love had been able to show itself, after all, only in endless little services, in the daily intimacies of coffee cups and ironing board; now those services were no longer needed, and those intimacies had been long interrupted, and she felt her children to be strangers.

More than that, her only son was absent; roaming the snowy world desolate and alone, his big heart aching for his son. And when she remembered Jim, Mrs. Callahan's heroic struggle to seem natural and happy died away in ashes and despair. It was a fine Christmas Day whatever, she reflected, without a sight or sound of the lad!

"Do you know, I think she would have liked it better if we'd put the whole job up to her," Mary murmured despondently to Annie in a moment of privacy. "I believe she'd have liked to do it—I'm afraid it's kind of hurt her, our taking it out of her hands!"

"I think so too," Josie agreed, stricken. "She acts so funny. She just answers yes and no—not a bit like ma!"

"Well, we'll just have to go on with it," Annie answered, sighing. For the dinner was in the actual process of dishing up.

From an epicurean standpoint, nothing could have excelled the meal. Ma herself had never roasted more wonderful turkeys, Josie's biscuit was perfection, there were gravy and jelly and dressing and corn pudding for a multitude. The children stuffed, passed plates, and stuffed anew; their elders showed only slightly inferior appetites.

And yet there was a singular heaviness in the air. Ida secretly mourned for her absent Jim, and counted the months from June to December with a sinking heart. Annie filled Frank's plate with the choicest bits of everything, timidly watching for his smile. Josie talked gallantly, although a certain feverish heaviness upon the part of little Rose Agnes was making her heart stand still with terror. Ma ate, complimented the cooks punctiliously, addressed herself principally to her grandchildren. She remarked that little Francis had been with them at Christmas two years ago and wondered aloud who would go next.

Failure. The family dinner was an absolute failure. Annie could have wept, thinking of the money and time and effort that had been wasted to force this wretched affair into being. The men were heavy, dull and in the way, when the ice cream and cake were finished and the children were ubiquitous and quarrelsome.

The sun had gone behind leaden clouds, and a cold raw wind was blowing over the sunless snow. Josie was practically and briskly preparing the six children for a good half-hour's play out-of-doors when her husband, in his capacity as doctor, inter-

fered. It would be dangerous, flushed and tired and excited as they were, to send them out so late in the winter afternoon, he said. No, Rose Agnes positively should not go. No, it was not safe.

John was always so gentle and kind that Josie felt his tacit reproof like a blow. Tears were in her eyes as she wiped glasses and spoons and knives, and plates and plates and plates, at the old familiar sink. Ida was ready for tears too; it was a strange Christmas Day without Jim. And Annie was exhausted almost to the point of joining them; she felt as if it were physically impossible for her to get home this afternoon, and get Frank a cup of tea, and tumble the children into bed.

"Put your coat on, Frank dear, and step up toward the cemetery and see if maybe you can't get hold of Jim and tell him how bad ma feels!" she whispered over the hot, clean knives. "Don't worry, darling!" she added, kissing him tenderly as he turned to obey.

But as the patient, shabby shoulders disappeared, in the stiff thick old coat, she felt a dry ache of tears in her throat, and she ran after him to kiss him again.

"Ma," Josie asked anxiously, "how do you know when it's mumps?"

"I suppose by taking them into a hospital and cutting something out of them!" her mother replied witheringly; and although Josie joined in the laugh that followed, it was not without a glance half pitying and half pleading to ma.

The shabby old rooms were very hot and heavy with food odors now, and in frightful disorder. Christmas toys were mingled in among the mussy plates and tumbled napkins, and the steamed windows were marked by dirty little sticky fingers.

It was Matt Curley, masticating an immense hard chocolate candy, and lounging in youthful ennui against one of these windows, who said suddenly, over the general hubbub of the dining room:

"Oh, gee, look—it's a drunk! Oo, no, it's not—they're bringing him in—it's a man that's been killed—"

"God save us, what's the child talking about?" Annie muttered, as she and Mary and Josie flew to the window. "Oh, God be good to us! God be good to us!" she said, in a hard tone that rang through the room.

One moment, peaceful dishwashing and cheerful Christmas disorder. And the next moment—*this!* This view of the familiar yard, the gate blocked with snow, the bare lilacs rattling in a bleak wind under a sullen sky. And the men—strange, silent, huddling men, in their heavy, worn overcoats, bringing in something hideous, heart-stopping—bringing something in—

There were screams, and the stamping of quick feet, and the children were pushed aside. A bitter draught of icy out-of-door air clove through the thick, food-scented rooms. Big muddy feet trampled in; the cluttered table was shoved aside; they laid Frank Curley down upon the dining room lounge. To the half-circle of pallid-faced, terrified women, some man, gruffly and awkwardly, spoke:

"It was Cottle's car—poor Frank was up by the Iron Works—he'd asked some feller there had he seen Jim Callahan. It was Cottle's fault—there was a cop right there, and he said so!"

"Oh, God help us—God preserve us!" the women whispered, their eyes upon the helpless, sodden lump that was Frank. A

great gasp and shudder went through the craning group when Mary, her young face ashen, gently eased the crushed head upon a crimson velvet cushion, and Frank moaned.

Suddenly Annie came through the press; Annie, with the freckles showing upon her pale, strained face, and the years of patient motherhood stamped upon her flat, thin body; Annie, with work-worn hands and her sweet, trembling mouth.

She sank quietly upon her knees beside him and took the torn, discolored hand that had been roughly rolled in mud and snow in her own hand, and her thin cheek rested upon his rich disordered hair. Over and over again the motherly voice said softly, breathlessly:

"Frank—my sweetheart! My own true husband—"

She looked bewildered at John Conannon as he gently put her aside. Josie, crying bitterly, was holding a basin of water; Mary, ashen-faced, was behind the couch, supporting the stained muddy head. In the background there was a huddle of terrified faces; Annie saw her baby boy in his highchair, with his big new ball in his fingers, and with a piteous trembling of his little mouth.

She caught him to her flat breast, stumbled into the kitchen, Matt and Helen clinging to her blindly, and found herself and her children suddenly caught in her mother's great arms.

"Come now, darlin'," said the familiar voice, with all its old heartening vitality and ring. "Annie—be a woman, dear! He'll want to see you the minute he opens his eyes. It's only a bad fall, dear! Take courage to yourself—"

"Ma—" It was poor Ida, forgotten in the last few moments of uproar, but staggering with pain and clinging tightly to the big comforting shoulder. "Ma—I don't know that I can get home—"

Mrs. Callahan, distracted in spite of herself, fixed alert eyes upon her son's wife. With Ida writhing and helpless, and Annie sunk in a stupor of agony upon a chair, with children pale and frightened about her, a sudden energy and courage almost youthful seemed to descend like a visible mantle upon their mother.

"The dear Lord stand by!" she said, richly and heartily concerned. "Don't you have a moment of worry, Ida dear, you'll do fine! Matt, take a handful of wood and run up to Aunt Josie's old room and make a grand little fire in the stove," she commanded. "Get hold of Uncle Dan, Helen, and tell him Gogga wants him. I'll send Mary upstairs with you, dear, and you just take everything easy—it'll all be over very quick this time, I told you so a month ago! John's here when you need him, and as soon as poor Frank feels better—sit where you are, Annie, and keep the baby in your arms—you poor girl, you. I'll go in and find out how things are going—"

Brisk, capable, resourceful, she stepped from her kitchen with the old, erect step of long ago. She immediately assumed control of everything that was passing in the dining room; somehow the onlookers scattered, and the children disappeared, and the door was closed. And by degrees, with here a little help from Josie and there a little more from Mary, the big table was cleared and pushed empty against a wall, and order succeeded chaos.



He thought he knew her well

NO matter *how* well you know a person—maybe even your very closest friend — there is one subject you instinctively avoid.

You may discuss the most intimate things about your family, your business and your personal affairs, but this one topic you dodge. There is something about halitosis (the scientific term meaning unpleasant breath) that seems to forbid honest conversation about it.

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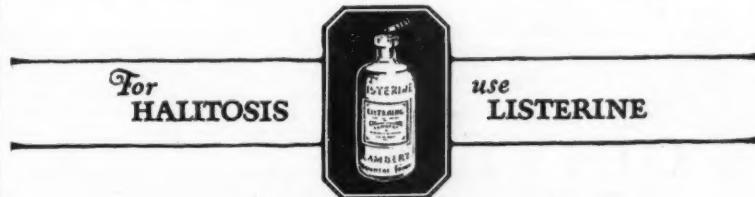
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Outside, the dark, brooding Christmas Day moved heavily to twilight. The wind, howling bleakly, ruffled the shawls and hats of frightened women, gathered whispering and glancing, in the snowy yard. Josie and Mary, and John and the strange doctor, fussed incessantly about the still unconscious and occasionally moaning Frank. Annie had the old rocker close beside her husband now; the baby was asleep in her lap, one of her thin, work-worn hands held Frank's hand.

Dan came back with the nurse for Ida. John Concannon was free for a few minutes to step upstairs. And Josie waylaid him in passing, and drew him into the big bedroom next to Ida's—the bedroom that had for so long been Jim's. Would he just look at Marty and Rose Agnes? Wouldn't it be the terrible thing if this was mumps?

They had a brief talk, husband and wife, and then ma came panting up, to find Josie in frightened tears.

"Shame upon you, Josie Callahan, the way you would be weeping and lamenting over such a thing entirely!" said ma roundly, half shaking and half embracing the terrified Josie. "Wit' poor Annie never letting a cry out of her—and the child smilin' up in the face of her, and his father all but dead on him—"

"All but dead?" Josie echoed, shocked, and instantly upon her feet, her tears dried. "Ma—is he so badly hurt?"

"We don't know yet, dear," said John gently. But he slowly shook his head. Josie looked from one to the other, her lips steady and a new look in her eyes.

"Why, mumps are nothing!" she said, quickly and reassuringly. "Rose Agnes would have to have them sometime, and I don't know where I'd rather be than here with ma! I'll put her in one bed, ma, and Marty in the other, and John can go back home without me when he has to go!"

"Well, now you're talking like yourself, dear, and you a great comfort—for all you're so nervous about the child, entirely!" her mother said in approval.

"And is Ida better, John?" Josie asked as she dried her eyes and began to examine the available blankets and pillows.

"Ida?" he said, smiling a little. "You know what's happening there?"

"What!" Josie whispered, aghast. And as her look met their answering, significant glances, she turned a little pale, undecided whether to laugh or cry. "Ma!" she faltered. And then "Ma—"

"Well, why not? Sure, she's much more comfortable here, with the pack of us to look out for her," Mrs. Callahan said reassuringly. "It won't be much work! I've got the turkey pretty well cut up—we'll have a big pot of stew and a sheet of me cornbread for supper. And that'll be enough, with plenty of tea all night in case me young lady here"—she glanced toward Ida's room—"keeps us all up. And please God it'll be a healthy baby, boy or girl—for it's a little soon—and give Jim something to fill up the poor broken heart of him!"

"I'll get these youngsters to bed and fire up the other stove," said Josie, capably.

"Mumps, is it?" asked Mary, who had just come in, and stood, in her water-and blood-stained Christmas finery, smiling at the now consciously important Matt and Helen. "Well, never a dull moment—that's your house, ma! Kate's come in," she added, "and she said she'd take Helen

and Matt home with her, the way they wouldn't get the contagion, and Julie Mooney's here, she's got the kitchen like a pin. Dan's gone off to find Jim."

"I'll give Jim Callahan a piece of my mind, walking off on all of us this way!" Mrs. Callahan said heartily. Her daughters' surprised looks met; there was in them a certain deep amusement and relief. It was good to hear ma scolding and bossing again! And ma went downstairs with the step that had not echoed so buoyantly through the shabby old house in months. She had mourned, she had brooded, she had petted and sympathized with Jim. But there was no health in all that compared with this sturdy and vigorous resentment!

"You'd think it would kill her," Mary whispered, following.

"Well, there's no help for it anyway!" Josie said.

At seven o'clock that evening Jim Callahan came quietly downstairs and into his mother's kitchen. He looked weary, but there was an expression of utter peace upon the handsome dark face, and his Irish blue eyes were dark with happy tears under the black crest of hair.

His mother, in an iron-gray calico, with a great stiff white apron tied about her waist and a knitted pink and gray shawl about her shoulders, was seated in a big rocker by the range. A good fire was going, and now she rose, opened the oven door and placed before her son a great plate of smoking, delicious food.

Jim looked at her a little timidly; her expression was magnificently stern. But it was wonderful to him to have ma her old, scolding, busy self again, managing the whole crowd of them with this scornful, brisk superiority. He brushed his face against her arm affectionately and said boyishly:

"Go on, ma. Jump me, and have it over!"

"A big, strong feller like you," his mother began readily and witheringly, "stravaging the streets on Christmas Day like a Turk that has no home, and poor Ida and the little one-teen laying up there—and might be dying like poor Rose Devlin herself, and you maybe at that minute buying yourself a cigar!"

"I didn't buy myself any cigars today," poor Jim said meekly. "I—I'm ashamed of myself, ma. But somehow—being Christmas—and thinking of him—he was—"

"Well, now you've got another boy to worry the heart out of you and have measles and sauce you back and play hokey and smoke cigarettes on you, the way you done on me!" his mother said roundly and unemotionally. "Did Kate give you a peek at the child?"

"She brought him in. Ide and I had a look at him, and then Ide went to sleep," Jim said, grinning, and then openly wiping his suddenly wet eyes. "He seems a fine little feller. I—I am grateful, ma. I'm not going to let little Frank's going spoil everything for Ide any more. I'm going to take her and the children out for picnics—the way we've always done—I know I've made it harder. I'm sorry, ma. I don't know what got into me. But it'll all be different now. You'll see!"

"I wouldn't wonder if the Lord would take the others now, if there's any more

of this running off from your good wife and breaking her heart on her!" his mother warned him sternly.

"Yes, I know, ma. You'll see, ma!"

"Well, I hope I will!" Mrs. Callahan said briefly. "Fine goings on for the man of the family," she muttered. "And now," she added suddenly, with a glance at the closed dining room door, and in a lowered voice, "now maybe with Annie—poor ger'r'l!"

Jim's face shadowed.

"I know it!" he said quickly. "It makes me ashamed that I ever thought of my own trouble. Ma, we'll stand by her if poor Frank don't pull through, won't we?"

"She'll have her mother and her mother's home, and we'll do what we can," his mother said, with a sudden quiver of her handsome mouth.

"Any change, ma?" And Jim glanced in turn at the dining room door.

His mother compressed her mouth, narrowed her eyes and slowly shook her head. Mary and Dan, returning from a trip to their own home, where Cecelia and Helen and Matt were established for the night, quietly entered the kitchen, shuddering with the cold, and powdered with the first flakes of a fresh blizzard.

"Any change, ma?" Mary whispered. And "Any change, ma?" Josie, returning from a last glance at the victims of the mumps, echoed anxiously.

"No, there's no change," their mother answered with a significant look. And heavily she added: "There'll be no change. John's there, and poor Annie sits there—she won't go to bed. We'll have to stand to poor Annie now, ger'r'l's—"

"Oh, ma, we will!" Mary and Josie cried passionately, one on each side of her on their knees, arms locked about her.

"She and her children will never want," Jim said steadily. "Poor Frank didn't speak to me. But when she was out of the room I knelt down beside him and I said that to him. And the look that came into his eyes—he knew what I meant! There's many a millionaire that doesn't leave his children what Frank Curley does!"

"You said the truth then," Mrs. Callahan assented, with a great sigh. And for a few minutes there was silence in the warm, orderly kitchen. Then ma roused herself, glanced at the stove, glanced at the clock.

"Well, I'm going to set me bread," she announced, rising. "With sickness in the house there's not much good in baker's stuff. Christmas—and all of us together for a little celebration—and look what's in it! May God make us resigned! Life's short for all of us!"

But in the firm, capable hand that reached for the pan, and in the bend of the straight back, and in the keen glance of the black Irish eyes, there was no sign of breaking. Life and death were hovering over her house, and the future was chaos, but the years had brought back the Callahan children to ma's guidance and ma's service, and the heart of Agnes Callahan, little as she or anyone else suspected it, was singing a song of gratitude and triumph within her breast.

A very small thing may change a man's whole life and outlook. It did with "The Man Afraid of His Job," by Kathleen Norris, in COSMOPOLITAN for February.



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His Children's Children

(Continued from page 64)

lifted her face and he saw that her eyes were swimming with tears.

"Come to the reception room!" he said, taking her by the arm and leading her towards the door. She followed willingly enough—but rather as if in a trance. Over his shoulder Maitland could see Florian hurrying down the corridor in the direction of the dining room. He could feel Sheila's heart beating against the back of his hand. They reached the reception room and Maitland pushed Sheila gently across the threshold in front of him, closing the door as Diana took her sister in her arms.

"Forgive me!" she begged. "I was horrid to you this morning!"

Sheila let Diana kiss her, then stepped back and threw a glance of inquiry at Maitland.

"Did you two come together?"

"Naturally," he answered. "I couldn't take you back to New York with me without a chaperon, could I? And, you see, you really can't stay here because your father is in trouble and needs you all to stand by him. He would not understand it if you didn't want to go."

"He never stood by me!" she retorted. "Neither he nor mamma ever took any real interest in me! Everything that makes life really beautiful I've learned from Doctor Dhal—"

"Doctor Dhal!" cried Diana fiercely. "That miserable sham!"

Sheila's eyes flashed and she clenched her fists.

"He is nothing of the kind! He is very wise and good." Her voice became thin and high. "He is 'all good.' I will not hear you say anything against my guru!" She faced Maitland with clasped hands. "I will go with you if you really want me to," she said. "I will go because you ask me—for no other reason. I do not believe papa needs me at all. That is just a trick to get me away. But I don't mind if you ask me to go. Do you understand?"

"I do ask you," Maitland assured her.

"Very well," she said. "I will come. But I must get my things. They are in the little house in the grove. I shall only be gone a minute."

She walked a few steps towards the door, but as she stretched out her hand to turn the knob it opened, disclosing Doctor Dhal upon the threshold.

"What is this?" asked the Yogi.

"Miss Kayne has decided to return to New York with her sister," said Maitland sternly.

"No one stays here against his will," Doctor Dhal answered with a smile. All are free to come and go as they will. How is it, my child—do you wish to leave your guru?"

He leaned towards her, looking into her eyes and still smiling, smiling. His wreathed lips murmured some word in a foreign tongue.

Sheila faltered, smiling faintly in return.

"You do not wish to leave your guru?" he said in a harsh metallic tone quite different from his ordinary glutinous utterance. "You do not wish to go! You will not go!"

"I do not wish to go!" repeated Sheila mechanically.

"You see, she says herself she does not

wish to go," smiled Dhal without taking his eyes from her face.

Maitland saw he was losing ground.

"Sheila!" he said authoritatively, stepping between her and Doctor Dhal. "I ask you to come with me. You said you would do so if I asked you. Come!"

He put his arm around her and drawing her to him led her towards the door where stood the Yogi. The smile did not leave Dhal's face, although a wicked gleam flashed for an instant in his black eyes.

"Wait a moment!" said Doctor Dhal. He raised one of his short dangling arms, barring their passage with a pudgy open palm.

"Get out of the way!" ordered Maitland sharply.

"Sheila! Little one—" purred the Yogi, dropping his hand to the child's shoulder.

With his full weight back of the blow, Maitland drove for the pulpy face just where the lips parted to show the glint of white. It was a blow that would have felled a far tougher philosopher than Doctor Dhal. The Yogi's head flew back, his knees gave way and he pitched forward to the floor, where he lay motionless, a bizarre and grotesque figure, his arms flung wide like a gaudy doll.

Maitland had struck without full realization of his act or of its possible consequences. But the satisfaction he derived from the blow would have amply compensated him for a month in jail.

Sheila seized him convulsively by the arm and buried her face in his shoulder, while Diana and he stared at the body on the floor as if they rather expected another Doctor Dhal to come floating sweetly out of a corner with a "Here you should look!" But nothing of that sort occurred. Apparently, if you hit him quick enough and hard enough you could dislocate Dhal's astral machinery.

The left foot in its crimson slipper twitched. An arm stirred; a stertorous sigh came from the swollen mouth. The omnipotent one was coming back from Nirvana or wherever he had been excursioning. From the other end of the corridor could be heard the echo of approaching voices. Maitland quickly snapped off the light in the reception room and dragged Sheila into the hall. Mr. Oscar Florian's scarlet dinner jacket flared close by. One of the women in bathing suits followed just behind him.

"Have you spoken with Doctor Dhal?" demanded the artist.

"Yes," answered Diana, "and I am taking my sister away."

Florian turned inquiringly to the young woman, who was evidently puzzled.

"I am afraid there must be some misunderstanding," she interposed, stepping forward. "Miss Kayne told me less than ten minutes ago that she expected to remain at the club for at least a week."

"She can speak for herself," said Lloyd. "Are you coming with me, Sheila?"

The girl raised her head but at the sight of Florian and his companion she turned away her face with a look of aversion.

"Yes," she whispered.

Without further parley Maitland and Diana hurried Sheila down the hall to the

veranda. As they stepped upon the gravel path the lights in the reception room burst forth again. They could hear the frenzied ringing of an electric bell. Shadows, like huge bats, darted to and fro past the windows. There were muffled shouts from within.

"Run!" directed Maitland. "Let's do a vanishing act ourselves!"

There was a key on the inside of the door in the wall and Maitland removed it, closed and locked the door behind them, and tossed the key into the bushes.

"And that's that!" he remarked. "Don't throw on your lights until we get farther down the road."

Next instant they had glided off into the darkness. Diana at the wheel, Sheila and Lloyd upon the back seat. She was trembling and after putting his coat over her shoulders he kept his arm about her. But she soon became calm and by the time they reached the highroad she was in her usual spirits. She would not permit Lloyd to remove his arm, however; it was more comfortable, she said.

The prosaic red and white lights in the drug store windows at Jamaica gave them all a sense of comfort. It was quite natural to Sheila to let her head rest on Lloyd's shoulder, as she so often had in her dreams, and to find herself answering all his questions so unreservedly. Now that the Butterfly Club was twenty miles behind them, her visit there seemed to have a curious quality of unreality.

Tactfully and by degrees Lloyd extracted from her what little there was to tell. She was sorry for Doctor Dhal, she said. He was really a well meaning man; but of course once you got away from it the whole thing did seem rather silly. She had had a pleasant enough time. There had not been the slightest need to worry about her. She was half asleep by the time they reached Queensboro Bridge and when Diana pulled up at the curb in front of the house the child seemed disinclined to get out. Before she did so she lowered her head as if to look for something in the bottom of the car, caught Lloyd's hand and pressed it swiftly to her lips.

There were two closed motors already there and Jarmon threw open the front door before they had reached the top of the steps. Two strangers were talking together in the front hall.

"Has anything happened, Jarmon?" asked Diana apprehensively.

"Your grandfather, miss. He had a stroke in the Park. He's upstairs in his room."

Instinctively Diana put her arm about her sister. One of the strange men accosted them.

"Miss Kayne? I am Doctor Wheelock. Is your sister Sheila here? Your grandfather keeps asking for her—that is, so we understand him. Will you see that she goes to him at once?"

Diana half closed her eyes. "Oh, Lloyd! Lloyd!" she murmured.

He took her hands. "This is where you're needed!" he said.

"And where we all—I—need you!" she answered feverishly. "Come, Sheila!"

They found Claudia upstairs sitting with Uncle Billy. The old man appeared stupefied at what had happened. The door to their grandfather's bedroom was open, light streaming from it.

The Pirate lay on his cot, his shaggy white head slightly thrust forward by the extra pillow behind it, staring at the door. A nurse stood in the background. Their father was kneeling beside the bed. In a chair at the foot sat their mother. There was something noticeably unnatural in their grandfather's position. Every moment or two he would make a spasmodic effort with his right arm and from his lips would issue an odd sibilant, a grotesque labial hissing. The nurse saw them and stepped forward with a smile of professional encouragement. Their father lifted his head, but Diana could hardly recognize his face. Elizabeth had the strained look of the self-consciously sympathetic. She got up and motioned to Sheila.

Sheila, her hands clasped before her, drew near the foot of the bed.

"Grandpa!" she whispered, forcing back a sob. "It's me—Sheila."

The eyes of the Pirate widened, and he lifted his head the fraction of an inch. It could not be said that a light came into his face, but the lines of his forehead moved upward and the pathetic semblance of a smile twisted one cheek. He made a heroic effort to articulate but his tongue had lost its power.

"Th-th—ss—"

Then his head sank to his chest and he gave vent to a long suspiration of relief.

When half an hour later she came downstairs, Diana found Lloyd waiting in the hall. To his glance of inquiry she said:

"He is quite helpless, poor old man! He may live as he is for some time. Conceivably he might make a partial recovery. But another shock would end it. It's terrible for father!"

"Come and let us get a bite to eat somewhere," he proposed, and he could see that the suggestion pleased her. They descended the steps just as the chauffeur was taking the car away.

"How lucky Sheila came with us!" she said as they walked along the avenue. "Grandfather knew her at once and it seemed to make him quite happy." Under its burden of sorrow her face seemed to him the most beautiful and the most tender that he had ever seen. "Of course you know the reason she came back?"

He read the answer and hurriedly looked away. "I never suspected," he answered in a gruff voice. "Poor kid!"

"But why?" she continued, very softly. "She's so sweet! And she needs someone so!"

"No!" he replied. "It can't be! It's no use! I'm sorry. But I've nothing to blame myself for!"

"Except for being you!" she said.

His heart was leaping, leaping! Was it possible that he had been wrong, misjudged her entirely all along? Slowly his vision cleared.

"Oh, Lloyd, you can't guess how I've been worrying about her the last forty-eight hours! She's so innocent! So easily influenced. And now everything seems to be falling about our ears. If I could only feel that she was safe!"

"It can't be!" he repeated, his brain awash. He was not going to find Diana merely to lose her! "It can't be!"

They walked on nearly a block without speaking. Then she said:

"How strange that all these misfortunes should happen to us at once. If I believed in a god I should almost feel as if it were a

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judgment of some sort. If it weren't for you, Lloyd, I don't know what I should do. You give me strength."

Again his heart leaped, forcing the blood to his eyes, his ears, his fingers!

"And I need it, Lloyd!" she went on. "For I have nothing else to cling to. I've never had any father of the ordinary kind at all. Church and all that sort of thing has never meant anything to me. I've never believed in a future existence of any sort. I've never been able to satisfy myself that there's any reason why any of us should accept the moral doctrines that are preached to us. We find ourselves here—that's all! And usually it seems wiser to play the game according to the rules."

She lowered her head and dropped her voice.

"Sometimes I've followed the rules and sometimes I haven't—but in the end, if I haven't, I have always been sorry—for no reason that has seemed adequate."

His heart stopped entirely. Obviously she was speaking of Devereaux. It was as if a lance had been thrust through his breast. Yet he knew that the pang was only lest she should still love Devereaux and not himself.

"At first it doesn't seem to matter what you believe, because life is such fun anyway. You have the idea that nobody is really bad except in books. And then you discover that in point of fact the world is full of all kinds of crookedness and that the people on top and often the most respected are apt to be the worst of all. You wonder what is the use of trying to be on the level yourself. You run into two poor souls like Claudia and Nigel and you realize that there isn't any justice in the world. And—and—sometimes you want to kill yourself!"

She spoke with a bitter intensity that almost frightened him.

"You have never felt like that!" he challenged desperately. Why should she have ever felt like that, except for one cause?

"Indeed I have!" she answered gloomily. "Most lives on their face aren't worth living. And sometimes it seems as if the game wasn't worth the candle."

"Then why?" he demanded, "are so many sure that it is? If life is nothing but 'dead sea fruit' why are there so many people who are really happy?"

"Perhaps they aren't!" she replied. "Perhaps something has blinded—doped them. Perhaps in every case the man or woman who thinks he or she is happy is doped by success, or money, or fame, or popularity, or—something. If they die before it wears off, well and good; then perhaps they die happy. If they live too long they just—for the most part—keep up a pretense."

"But haven't you been happy?" he asked in surprise. "I certainly always thought of you as that."

"Oh, Lloyd!" she answered sadly. "If you only knew!"

"Then you were never doped by money or popularity?"

"For a year or two perhaps—not any longer. You see now why I need your help—your encouragement? I'm the only one of the family that isn't in some sort of trouble. I've got to pull things out if I can. And somehow I feel as if I were entirely alone. I've got nothing really to go by. I don't say I'm an absolute cynic,

but only that, so far as I can see, there's no logical answer to the cynic's argument of 'what's the use?' I don't know of any reason for being honest or decent or sincere. That's what makes everything so hopeless!"

"Why do you tell me this?" he asked suddenly.

"Because it's only fair that you should know—if I am asking your friendship."

He began laughing excitedly. The last six hours had been fairly emotional for a dry-as-dust. What a jolly ass he had been!

"But Diana!" he cried, pulling her around so that she faced him. "Don't you see—hang it all!—that you've answered the question yourself? The reason you do the things you ought to do is because you must do them if you want to be happy. And you always know what it is, every time!—or pretty nearly every time," he qualified himself.

"Conscience?"

"That's what I call it."

"But I don't believe in conscience!"

"Call it anything you like, then."

"Conscience didn't make me want to tell you about myself."

"But something did!"

She twisted away from him, but he caught her by the arm.

"Diana! Why tell me the truth if you don't believe in it? It's because you do believe in it! You may think you don't believe in anything and refuse to admit that you've any religion. But all the time you know that you're part of the whole works, and recognize it by what you call 'playing the game' and 'being a sport.' I'd rather have your instinct than my conscience, all confused as it is with law and ethics and inherited conventions. Oh, Diana, you are just as you look! You think you're cynical and materialistic but you're not—you're generous and true—and—and beautiful!"

"No! No!" she protested but her eyes sought his hungrily. His heart swelled in a great ecstasy.

"Diana," he cried, "I love you! I love you! I love you!"

He felt her arm tremble in his grasp and heard her catch her breath. They were passing a flight of steps and he led her into the shadow. A policeman eyed them suspiciously. Maitland took her by both shoulders. She lifted her face to his and her eyes were closed.

"I love you! I love you!" he repeated excitedly. "You're everything there is for me in life! I've always loved you! You're the most wonderful, astounding person in the world for me! I can't live without you. You must have known it. Of course you knew it. Why did you try to get me to say I cared for Sheila? When I love you—only you—never anyone else! Diana! Say you love me! Say it! Say it!"

"Oh, Lloyd! Lloyd!" was all she said. But there was a radiance in her face.

He was kissing her now, holding her head in his two hands, and her tears were slipping warm across his fingers. He brushed them away with his lips.

"Anyhow say you need me!" he whispered.

"I—love—you!" she answered, holding her cheek to his.

He was wafted to paradise, all about him he heard the chiming of bells and the strains of celestial music, smelled the odor of strange and intoxicating incense.

"Quick! Let me go! That policeman is coming across the street!" she said.

He felt like a giddy fool as, tightly holding her hand, they continued without consciousness of direction along the avenue.

"And I always thought—was sure you were in love with Larry. Are you quite positive that you were not?"

"Quite!" she answered, laughing. "I liked him tremendously but I never was the least little bit in love with him. I never was in love before. One can't mistake it, you know!" And then she added, glancing up at him with little husky laugh, "I may be 'doped'—but I'm happy!"

CHAPTER XXIX

A RED flag drooped—flapping intermittently—from an oaken pole protruding from one of the lower windows of the Kayne house. It bore in large dirty white letters the word "Auction." It was the hour when Rufus Kayne usually made his appearance at the head of the brownstone steps, deferentially followed by Jarmon, and descended, buttoning his gloves, to his waiting motor. But on this particular morning his place was occupied by a colored boy in green livery, wearing a pillbox cap marked "Peterman" in gold letters.

The colored boy, leaning against the iron grille of the open door, regarded the pedestrians below with hauteur. Until Mr. Burleigh should arrive—which would not be until precisely one minute before ten o'clock—he was in charge, and he was full of the insolence of office.

Spring had burst the invisible bonds forged secretly by winter, and in an unrestrained paroxysm of relief had scattered its evidences everywhere up and down the avenue like confetti after a carnival. And on the ledges of the Kayne house bloomed window boxes full of geraniums, heliotrope, crocuses and yellow cowslips, since nobody had warned the florist that his semi-annual visit was to be unnecessary that spring. There was certainly something incongruous in this tax on permanency, this last touch of personal luxury and elegance, and the huge canvas sign suspended between those flower-decked windows, reading:

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For two weeks now the Pirate had hovered between life and death upon the upper floor. In the excitement attendant upon the old man's collapse no one had had time to think of business matters and the preparations for the auction had gone on until it was too late—at any rate Mr. Burleigh said it was too late—to cancel them.

The old man had hardly stirred since they had laid him upon his narrow cot—the hard narrow cot that he so preferred to Miss Lamb's box springs. They knew that he was probably dying and by virtue of that fact he regained for the time being in their imaginations all his colossal proportions. The Head of the House, the Founder

of the Family, the Giant—was dying! They thought no more of him as a gentle, feeble octogenarian. The frail body that lay motionless in that silent room harbored the soul of a great man, a hero, a pioneer—and they thought only of that great soul. He had come back. Once more he dominated their minds, their very bodies, seeming to pervade all the rooms and to stand at the head of the stairs.

Just as their steps inevitably led them to his door, so their thoughts centered ceaselessly about his bed. Rufus left the room only for his meals. He was dazed, dumbfounded by his own grief. Nothing else had touched him. He could imagine life without the trust company, without Elizabeth, without any of his children—but not without the Pirate. He knew that the Pirate's room was the only church in which he had ever really worshiped. And now the shrine would soon be empty. Anxiously he watched his father's set face; watched until his eyelids were weary and his eyeballs ached, watched until he seemed to be in the same sort of trance as that in which the old man lay.

The girls spent much of their time there too. Everybody had been very kind and the front hall had been kept full of flowers, for which Diana wrote the letters of acknowledgment besides taking over the entire management of the house. But although they all made a pretense of being cheerful and of believing that the Pirate would get well, they knew in their hearts that he would never leave his room again.

Still, on the morning of the auction Doctor Follansbee, who had been in faithful attendance, said that the old man really seemed better. He could detect a slight return of muscular power in the leg and arm. The nurse might even use her discretion about letting him sit up for a while in the armchair. It was possible that it would do him good. But they must watch him and not let him make any undue effort.

So while the colored boy in his pill-box cap lounged below in the sunshine smoking his cigarette and waiting for his master to come and knock the house down to the highest bidder, the man who had built it lay upstairs ignorant of all that had happened. So far as old Peter knew the House of Kayne might last forever. Rufus, sitting beside the bed with his hand thrust beneath that of his father, was struck by the dignity of the old man's profile as he slept, the nobility of the marble forehead as it rose from the aureole of untrimmed hair and beard in which it was framed. There was in the face an austere and august stateliness.

Gently, so very gently as hardly to be noticeable, the sheet upon the Pirate's breast rose and fell. Two sparrows lit upon the adjacent sill, twittered, cocked their heads at Rufus and darted off again. Far up in the blue there could be heard the drone of an aeroplane.

The Pirate thought he heard a fly buzzing and woke. He objected to flies, and there was a bell—a doleful bell—tolling! All his senses were alert. He had not suffered; he was not suffering now. It was only that strange numbness of his left side—a touch of sun in the Park, the doctor had said. He'd be all right. Well, it had been worth it! Those children! How they had enjoyed it! He mustn't be cross! And Sheila had come back. She was over by the window looking up into the air.

"An airplane, grandpa!" she said. "Right up there!"

He followed her glance, but his eyes could not get beyond the frame of the window in which she stood. Not a fly, then. The clatter of the plane filled the room. It made him angry. He stirred and uttered a sound of feeble protest.

"Yes, father! I'm here!" answered Rufus.

Sheila came from the window. "What is it, grandpa dear?" she asked.

"I want to get up!"

They were startled. It was the first time that he had articulated normally since he had been stricken, and his voice seemed like a voice from the tomb. Yes, his appearance was reassuring. Surely there was a slight tinge of color in those waxen cheeks! Could it be that the fighting spirit which in the past had overborne all his competitors was now to vanquish his last and greatest enemy for another round?

The nurse hurried forward from the corner.

"If he wants to!" she said. "The doctor suggested it himself. This lying in bed is so weakening!"

She turned down the sheet and the soft shriveled body filled Rufus with acute compassion. Slowly they raised him to a sitting posture and lifted his thin old legs over the side of the bed. Tears were in Rufus's eyes as he knelt down and put his father's feet into his slippers.

Then the nurse thrust his arms through the wide flowing sleeves of his dressing gown, and unassisted transferred the wasted body to the invalid chair, stuffing pillows about it for support.

"Fine!" said the Pirate, highly excited by so great an adventure. "I'm—going—to—get—well! You'll see—Sheila!"

It was half-past nine as Maitland approached the Kayne house. There was to be a military funeral at the Cathedral that morning and as a member of the Legion's local post he had donned his uniform for the first time since returning from overseas. How strange to be walking up Fifth Avenue in a uniform which he had worn within sound of German guns!

He had thought constantly of Dorman ever since the news of the latter's suicide had been made public. A brave soldier, a loyal friend, a good fellow, a chivalrous spirit!

One of the heroes of the war! Their regiments had struggled side by side through the ravines of the Argonne. His mind refused to grasp the fact that Dorman was dead—and by his own hand. He had seen him only recently at the Players and now recalled that he had seemed disengaged over his lack of success in finding work for such of the survivors of his regiment as were partially disabled.

He could suffer himself—but he couldn't stand watching their suffering. His nerves had buckled under the strain. His poor brain had cracked. Another gallant lad gone West!

Maitland paused on the corner opposite the Kayne house. Motors from which fashionably dressed women were getting out stood at the curb. A few stragglers were idling on the sidewalk. The front of the house wore an unfamiliar look, as if its mouth and eyes were opened in surprise at what was going on. Maitland stood and looked at it. So it was going! Just as the Kaynes were going. Such houses, such

families, rose and fell, came and went, with hardly anybody the wiser. Monuments to the inconsequence of human life!

He crossed the street, ascended the steps and entered the front hall where the auction was to take place. It looked gloomier than ever with its rows of folding chairs. One of the big tables had been swung around crossways at the foot of the organ. Upon it had been placed a huge pile of catalogues.

There were a score of people already seated or wandering around examining the *objets d'art* and more were coming in at the doorway every moment, bringing with them an odor of cigars reluctantly discarded upon the topmost steps. These earlier arrivals for the most part were seedy looking men among whom was a scattering of sharp-featured, capable women—obviously professionals, second-hand dealers.

What were they doing there, these strangers? Were they lost to all sense of decency that they could thus swarm through another's house, straggling through the rooms, fingering the rugs and window curtains, tracking up the stairways, examining the pictures and china, prying into the closets and opening the piano? The soul of the house was being violated; its sentiment, its atmosphere defiled!

It was shocking to expose these intimate possessions of the family sacred to them by long association! Here they had dwelt—four generations of them—sheltered from public view in what the law had said was their castle. Here Rufus had brought his young wife and entertained their friends. Here his children had been born. Here they had passed their girlhood. Here Claudia had been married with the organ pealing out the wedding march and the hall crowded with uniforms. Here Elizabeth had lived her life, such as it was, and gathered her fat friends about her. Here the old Pirate had climbed—before the elevator—to his room on Uncle Billy's arm. Here, in the earlier days at least, there had taken place family quarrels and conclaves, childish tears, confessions and repents, whispered avowals and laughing protests, sad goings-away and gay homecomings—and up those stairs no longer than two weeks ago the stricken form of the old Pirate had been carried to the room where now he lay.

With what care and study—no matter what the taste exercised—each of the pieces of furniture had been chosen! What an event the purchase of the tapestries! No room, no passage, no landing, no stair, no square foot of floor space that was not pregnant with memory, peopled by the ghosts of former years!

The crowd behind shoved Maitland along and he made his way through the hall and ascended to the second story, where he encountered Jarmon. From him Lloyd learned that the old gentleman seemed to be somewhat better and that Miss Diana had gone out.

Lloyd descended to the landing on the mezzanine floor and paused, surveying the hall below. The visitors were coming in now in a steady stream, each receiving at the door one of the circulars, then working around among the chairs for an advantageous place.

Squarely implanted in the middle of the second row Lloyd could see the robust figure of Mrs. Brice-Brewster in a coquettish straw hat fringed with spears of wheat.

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Senator Krass, a vacant expression upon his long pink face, made his way towards the front followed anxiously by his small wife like a dog at heel. He indicated a seat in the front row, removed his hat with solemnity, reached for a catalogue and sank down beside her. In the center of the room sat Mrs. Wingate and beside her Rita Ricardo to whom, evidently, Doctor Dhal had extended a half-holiday. Most of the chairs were taken by this time and a line of standees had formed on the side next the staircase. In one of the front windows he could see Darcy and Longwood, and wondered what they could be doing there. A couple of hundred women formed a solid phalanx in the middle of the hall. It was like an afternoon tea.

The same old crowd—drawn by curiosity, cupidity, or by the desire to experience that satisfaction which La Rochefoucauld so cynically claims the best of us derive from the misfortunes of our friends. This tragedy of success was nothing to any of them. With the exception of a few dull souls, who like Emily Brice-Brewster had a sincere if mild affection for Elizabeth, none of these people cared two straws for the Kaynes or what became of them. Most of them actually disliked Rufus and disapproved of his children—were glad of the opportunity to say "I told you so!"

Maitland glanced at his watch. It was one minute to ten. He looked about him for a place where he could comfortably see and hear all that went on, self-consciously aware that his uniform made him too conspicuous to go downstairs. He was vitally interested in the price which the house itself might bring, since upon the success of the sales depended his future father-in-law's ability to meet his obligations. There was to be no "upset" price; it was to go for what it would fetch, and the auction might be a fiasco.

The mezzanine gallery ran entirely around the wall and he stepped into it and sat down on a bench over the organ. On his left hung the three great Flemish tapestries purchased by old Peter thirty years before for forty thousand dollars—to cover up Howlett's original scheme of decoration, which Elizabeth had regarded as too commonplace; huge affairs fourteen feet by twelve and correspondingly heavy, hung by a few brass hooks on a gilded molding and entirely covering the westerly side of the hall, including the cornice. On the one nearest was depicted an amorous, or possibly merely amiable, group of Olympians quaffing goblets of nectar amid the clouds, their muscular arms about one another's pillar-like necks—undoubtedly the best people of their time.

At that instant, as foreordained, Mr. Burleigh made his entrance, pushing authoritatively through the crowd about the threshold. The vital moment had at last arrived. In spite of himself Maitland experienced a choking of excitement. Mr. Burleigh—short, abdominal, with a gray beard and horn-rimmed glasses over his watery blue eyes, a carnation in his button-hole and a tiny pair of golden antlers pinned just below it—strode past the rows of chairs with the air of a benign autocrat. For thirty years he had been the popular auctioneer of the metropolis. He was the master of ceremonies—the whole show—they could not get on without him. He knew who everybody was, who meant business and who was there merely for the fun of it.

But knowing these things did not affect his detachment. It was nothing to him what price anything brought or who bought it. It was his business to sell to the highest bidder whatever was offered; and he would sell with like indifference a rug, a picture, a basinet, a statue or a rolling pin. Had he lived prior to 1861 he would, with equal nonchalance, have sold slaves.

There was that about Mr. Burleigh which made Maitland shiver. Was it possible that the man was entirely destitute of feeling?

"I'll sell the house first," said he in a mild but penetrating voice. That was all: "I'll sell the house first." With no more ceremony than that did he open the obsequies of this palatial brownstone edifice. He was no barker—no mountebank—although he knew his business.

"The house itself is of course worth nothing," he continued. "But the land—the possibilities of this location—are immensely valuable. It is undoubtedly one of the best sites in the city."

Worth nothing? Lucky that old Peter Kayne lying on the top story could not hear him! Worth nothing? Maitland imagined the walls quivering with mortification, the floors trembling with indignation. Worth nothing! Had it not cost, with its furniture a million dollars? Did Burleigh not know that that house had been built to last? That it was the best house of its time? That its beams and rafters were of the finest seasoned timber, its brownstone chiseled from a special quarry, each brick handpressed and baked, its foundations excavated to the solid rock, its floors sound-proof, its walls of double thickness—a mansion, a castle, a citadel, a stronghold, a fortress! Worth nothing?

The words reverberated along the mezzanine and among the pipes of the organ. Maitland no longer heard what Burleigh was saying. Could it be true that it was worth nothing? He looked over the rail behind which he was concealed. Directly below him in the second row beside Mrs. Brice-Brewster was his partner Vincent Pepperell, nodding at the remarks of the auctioneer. He recalled vividly what the old gentleman had said the first time he had deigned to discuss the Kaynes, stigmatizing them as materialists, all the more significantly for that he was one himself; intimating that they worshiped the golden calf of wealth, place and fashion, that they lived "by bread alone." Had he not been right? And was not Burleigh right—although in a different sense? Was the house worth anything? He had seen those figures on the roof! Had Howlett with his keen insight into men known what would happen to the Kaynes?

Mr. Burleigh was announcing the terms and conditions of sale—twenty-five thousand dollars down, balance in fifteen days. Maitland, stretching his spurred and booted legs, became conscious again of being in uniform. In a few minutes he would be following Dorman's coffin up the aisle of the Cathedral. Poor Chuck! One more gone to join the fifteen million upon whom had been visited the penalty of the world's materialism.

"Boom!"

The Cathedral bell had begun to toll. It trembled in the organ pipes and the shudder in the air took him back to the Argonne. It was like the detonations of a

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German heavy; like those on that misty morning after the Boche had felt them out and got the range, when the two regiments had received the order to advance and he had talked to Dorman over the field telephone and they had wished each other luck. That same morning when he had fired at the gray ghost and it had screamed and died. Had that been for nothing? Was it all for nothing?

"Boom!" He must go—go to Dorman!

What was Burleigh saying? "Seven hundred thousand?" Ha-ha! He and his faun-eared assistant were laughing at such an offer! Someone had bid seven hundred and twenty-five!

The floor creaked. A hand fell lightly on Maitland's shoulder. A kiss brushed his cheek. Diana! He seized her hand, drew her down beside him on the bench and touched his lips to her forehead and hair.

"Grandfather's better," she whispered. "He's quite wonderful this morning! The doctor has let him sit up in the armchair, but if he should get well he'd be frightfully upset about the house. Poor old house!"

Maitland held her to him without reply.

"Why are you in uniform?" she asked suddenly. "I like you in it!"

"I'm going to a military funeral," he answered. "You can hear the bell."

"Whose?"

"Chuck Dorman's—we were together on the other side."

She shivered and drew closer.

"Boom!"

He looked at his watch. Ten minutes yet. Burleigh's rasping voice rose from the floor below, punctuated by the tolling bell.

"Seven hundred and thirty thousand? Giving it away I tell you! Do I hear the five? Thank you! Do I hear forty? Forty—forty—forty? Thank you! And five? It's your bid, sir. Thank you. Seven hundred and forty-five thousand dollars! Do I hear the fifty? Fifty—fifty? Do I hear the fifty?"

The bidding had centered between two men in the front row, and the audience was pressing forward the better to see and hear what was going on.

"Boom!"

Mr. Burleigh leaned over the banister and looked inquiringly at a snuffy little man next the aisle. The little man nodded almost imperceptibly.

"And fifty!" ejaculated Mr. Burleigh, and the crowd exhaled with relief.

"Seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars! Do I hear the five? Going at seven hundred and fifty. Fifty-five—fifty-five—fifty-five? Do I hear the five?" He looked at the opposing bidder, who shook his head and reached for his hat.

"Boom!" went the Cathedral bell.

"Going at seven hundred and fifty thousand!" intoned Mr. Burleigh in the same key.

The Pirate sat in his chair, his arms extended, his shaggy head protruding from the pillows like that of some law-giver of old. Rufus had gone downtown to finish up his business at the trust company and Sheila had taken Uncle Billy out for a walk. The nurse, hoping that her patient would go to sleep again, had gone into the next room and, leaving the door open between, was reading a detective story. But the Pirate could not go to sleep, and he did not

want to. All his irritation had disappeared.

It was not right to be fussy when they were all so kind. The air was sweet—sweet. The Pirate could feel new strength stealing into his veins. Yes, he was going to get well! More of life! The thought filled him with painful gladness. The numbness that had made his left side feel like lead was almost gone.

And now, through the door left open by the nurse, there came to his ears a rasping, intermittent noise like that of a distant phonograph. It rose and fell, paused and began again; a curious noise to be in a private house, as if somebody was delivering a lecture downstairs. He stood it patiently for a while although it annoyed him. Yes, somebody was talking in an exasperatingly loud nasal tone. His irritation returned. Why couldn't they keep the house quiet? Where was the nurse? Why had she left the door open? He called her name, but at that moment she had stepped down to the pantry for a glass of milk. Angry at his failure to get any response, the Pirate pushed off the coverlid from his knees and stood up. The effort did not inconvenience him and he took a few steps towards the door, intending to close it to keep out the sound of the voice. He seemed to be able to walk as well as ever!

He paused with his hand on the door frame and listened. From where he stood the whole house seemed full of strange squeaks and murmurs, whisperings and rustlings, broken by the sing-song shouting of the voice which floated up from the front hall. What was going on down there? Strange people had intruded into his house. Who could they be? He must see about that!

Shakily, with his hand upon the banister, the Pirate felt his way down the stairs. The noises grew louder with each step of his descent; and his anger grew proportionately. Who was making all that fuss in his house? He reached the third landing and started down toward the second, just below which the gallery of the mezzanine led off. The noise that now filled the house was like that of the sea crashing upon the rocks. Above the thunder of the surf he could hear the tolling of a bell buoy. Someone was shouting to him, but the waves drowned the voice so that he could not distinguish what it was saying. Clang! went the knell of the buoy. Clang! He was on the second landing now, and the roar of the breakers in the entrance hall was like thunder in his ears. He would not go down there. He would only go into the gallery and peek over to see what was happening.

"Going at seven hundred and fifty thousand!" Mr. Burleigh was chanting down below. "Do I hear the five? Fifty-five—fifty-five—fifty-five? It's being thrown away, I tell you! Thrown away! For the last time—going at seven hundred and fifty thousand! Going once! Going twice!" He raised his pencil and looked round the hall. "Going three times!" He brought the end of the pencil down with a smart tap.

"Sold! To the Goethals-Schwenken Company for seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars!"

There was a general murmur of relief, a shuffling of feet. Mr. Burleigh poured out a glass of water and drank it slowly. Half a dozen people got up and went out.

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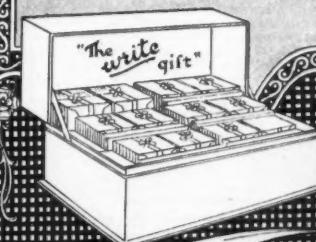
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"And now," continued the auctioneer, picking up the catalogue and opening it at the first page, "we will dispose of the furniture and objets d'art. I will begin with the three tapestries hanging on your right. Number one. Very rare allegorical eighteenth century Flemish—fourteen by twelve. Buyer to have option of purchasing either or both of the others at same price."

The spectators resettled themselves, turning with one accord towards the corner by the organ where hung the Olympians.

"These tapestries, ladies and gentlemen, are museum pieces and should bring a handsome figure. They were bought in Europe for Mr. Peter Kayne at the time the house was built. I may say they were the talk of New York."

He beckoned to the negro boy. "Now Jo, just lift up the corner of number one—yes, that next the organ—so the ladies and gentlemen back there can see the design."

Diana and Maitland, from the gallery above, watched the boy walk across in front of the first row of chairs, past Senator Krass, past Mr. Pepperill and Mrs. Brice-Brewster, bend over and take the corner of the tapestry in his hands. Many of the audience moved their chairs to get a better view. There was going to be a chance for everybody to pick up a bargain.

"Boom!"

The Cathedral bell had begun again. The "minute bell" for the dead.

Suddenly Maitland felt Diana's clasp tighten.

"Look!" she gasped. "Look!"

At the other end of the mezzanine, but twenty feet from where they sat, under the full glare of the electricity, stood the

patriarchal figure of her grandfather in his dressing gown, gazing down upon the throng. His face wore a puzzled look, but his figure in its flowing garment had an austere and rugged grandeur. For an instant only did he stand there. Before either Diana or Maitland could stir to help him they saw his left hand clutch the tapestry at his side, his body stiffen and collapse backward into the gallery.

The tug on the tapestry loosened one corner from its fastenings. The group of Olympians sagged sideways. A hook leaped singing into the air over the heads of the audience. The molding cracked ominously.

"Look out!" cried a voice. "It's going to fall!"

"Boom!" came from the Cathedral. "Boom!"

There was a frenzied rush on the part of the spectators to get clear. Two or three women screamed. Chairs were overturned. With a loud report the tapestry ripped the molding from the wall and fell upon the floor in a crumpled heap.

There was a momentary hush. A cloud of dust rose towards the mezzanine, slowly settling again, while the startled onlookers gradually regained their composure. There burst forth a confused hubbub of ejaculation, jocularity, laughter—followed by silence as their eyes turned to where the tapestry had hung. Upon the wainscoting beneath, totally forgotten and now revealed for the first time since it had been carved there forty years before, appeared the inscription:

"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."

END.

Beach Roses

(Continued from page 73)

I want you should have them,' she says, and with that she runs off down the beach." Here the old woman winked slyly. "And she's there yet—with the night clerk from the Strand, and a nice boy as ever you saw he is, too. And I doubt he'll be wearin' one of them roses behind the desk tonight, so I do."

The young man stood like a soldier. "Miss Anne Hudson!"

"The same . . . What's wrong?"

Nothing was wrong at all, except that at the same moment he had caught sight of a headline of that local newspaper. "Percy D. (Lucky Dan) Carroll at the Seaward Inn—He Arrives Unexpectedly—Avoids Reporters."

"Not a thing, mother," he said thoughtfully. "Much obliged."

He struck out for the Inn, where his suite was costing him sixty dollars a day; but presently, when he saw two figures silhouetted against the afterglow, he quitted the boardwalk and took to the sand. The two young people, oblivious to the universe, were sitting with their arms around each other; at the girl's breast were three red roses, and a fourth was in the man's buttonhole.

And not hearing Carroll's footsteps on the sand, they kissed each other.

Under his breath Carroll laughed blithely. The old woman had been right; and four separate people were believing in fairies all over again.

One Block From Fifth Avenue

(Continued from page 23)

the bed to go. Being an east window it looked toward Fifth Avenue, but of Fifth Avenue there was visible, from this point, only a fretted and formidable skyline that rose beyond a jumble of boxed-in courts, and odds and ends of lesser buildings, and queer-shaped slices of wasted space enclosed in high useless fences. Also there was a tree. It was one of those trees which seem to grow exclusively in New York back yards. Such trees thrive on dampness and everlasting shade and the Monday drippings from somebody's clothesline.

They are curious fronded trees which give off a sour smell when the sap rises in them in the spring and again when their leaves wither in the fall. I do not know the right name for them; let's call them back yard trees. They are to be seen only when the wreckers tear away the houses in front, thereby exposing an inner walled town of rear tenements and unsightly sheds, which until then had been unrevealed and unsuspected; or when you live, say, as in this instance, on the third floor, back.

When the occupant of the room in point wearied of her own private view, which was often, and when she had the time to spare on her hands, which was generally, she might, by walking the length of a short hall to a window at the farther end of this hall, command a different outlook. Here, spread beneath, was life and plenty of it. The elevated, like a thousand-legged earwig, sprawled by just below her, with its striped back narrowing in perspective and finally diminishing off this way and that to nothing at all. And when the trains went past, like lesser insects scooting along up and down the spinal column of this greater one, their weight and their speed made the long endless worm shake; and the grating of their wheels for the moment would drown out the sound of everything else.

The L's centipede chopped the vista short off at the downward angle. Even so, there was much to be observed by one stationed above. Within the compass of the block might be seen a taxidermist's shop, an undertaker's shop, a shop for the curing of raw furs, a misfit clothing parlor where garments which had died once elsewhere came to undergo a purgatorial delay under hot irons and benzine before their next reincarnation; a painless dentist's, a loan parlor, called by the vulgar *hock-shop*; a bird and animal store advertising itself by its own aromas; a stationery store, a tobacconist, selling likewise daily papers and periodicals; a Yiddish lunchroom specializing in cold fried fish and strictly kosher hot frankfurters; a hat-cleaning establishment, a basement dweller who deals in ice, coal and kindling wood; a Greek employment agency, a club for Swiss waiters, head, side, and omnibus; two orangeade stands, an Italian green-grocer's, a hardware store, a second-hand furniture store, a museum of human anatomy—Boys under Sixteen Positively Not Admitted; a corner where a saloon has been, now For Rent, With or Without Fixtures; a boot-blacking stand, a jobbing house in artificial flowers, a trunk store which always was on the point of going immediately out of business and therefore offered sacrificial bargains in suitcases and

grips. Not all these were on her side of the street nor yet all on the ground levels. They began in the cellars and they mounted above one another, flight by flight, to the attics; but all of them and more besides in that same briefened stretch, from crossing to crossing, might be ticked off on the fingers by one who had leisure for such employment, as this one had; and sundry establishments among them might also be smelled, especially where two or three firms hived together as joint lessees of a single floor, pooling, as it were, the essential perfumes of their respective businesses.

Lesser merchandisers, of the itinerant cast, thronged on the sidewalk trade, preempting space for themselves in doorways and along curbstones and even out on the perilous roadway beyond the pavement line, and holding their ground against a clamorous and occasionally a threatening opposition. One day, warranted all-silk neckties seemed to have the favor of these ardent competitors; about every other one of them would be offering silk neckties at one for thirty-five, three for a dollar. Another day it would be bath sponges that they pushed, or patent pants hangers at ridiculously low prices, or roach poisons in handy packages. But the pretzel vendors never sought to tempt the popular fancy with new wrinkles. Their stocks, coiled like varnished brown snakes on upright spindles stuck around the edges of baskets or pushcarts, were staples, dependable and in constant demand. This likewise was true of the dealers in dill pickles; they knowing their public and having their regular clienteles.

Always, in the daytime, the avenue crawled with motion and went clanging the cymbals of industry. It was most active, though, and rivalry for customers reached the highest peaks, at noontime when the loft workers came downstairs for lunch and air and conversation; surface vehicles scarcely could get through the wedged pack then. There were two Jewish men of this persuasion who daily stationed themselves in an areaway almost directly under the window where our lodger watched, coming together for the resumption of an argument which, it seemed, would never be ended. In time she came to know both of them and to be on the lookout for them. In a dulled sort of way they fascinated her; their inevitable appearance made an interlude in the deadened monotony of her own midday. One of them, a small shabby man, talked with his mouth, his shoulders, his legs, his arms, his collarless neck and his hands—notably with his hands. His hands were forever in motion. Frequently, in the fever of debate, his fingers clutched the air as though he would seize argument out of the ether. His antagonist, a second generation American and dressed accordingly, rarely spoke and never gesticulated. He expressed all varying emotions—contempt, doubt, acquiescence, denial, conviction, wavering—by three mediums, to wit, his eyebrows, his under lip and the cigar that teetered between his teeth. His silence, somehow, was infinitely more potent than all the outcry of the posturing adversary. He probably had the most skeptical pair of



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Down yonder in Whippoorwillville Eddie Sackett got so he just naturally couldn't stand it any longer. Faithfulness cannot feed forever on itself; it needs more material provender, lest it starve to death outright. Anyway, from the standpoint of the economics, he was in position to take a trip. Out of its annual earnings and the fullness of its heart the railroad had at length seen its way clear to granting that raise in salary. Eddie put on his new mail order fall suit and caught Number Seven, east-bound. It had been nearly four months now since that last puzzling short letter came to him, nearly eight months since he had seen its writer.

A common carrier deposited him at Grand Central in the latter end of an October forenoon. From the moment of his arrival, almost, New York began jolting him financially. He knew what hotel he meant to stop at; it was one that advertised in the Dentondale Weekly Sun-Independent, mentioning moderate rates for single rooms with bath. The directions concerning street cars which a policeman at a door of the station gave him seemed distressingly intricate. To be on the safe side he took a taxicab. And the taxicab literally ate up money. Nearly every time he looked at the meter it had jumped another ten cents. Eddie Sackett wasn't stingy, but in Whippoorwillville a dime was nevertheless a dime and you expected some proper return for it.

Then there was the hotel when he arrived there, a confusing, a mastodonic, and despite its printed promises, an expensive establishment. A clerk gave him a room at a rate per day which the clerk evidently regarded as a very reasonable rate. It was dinner time now—dinner time comes in the middle of the day at Whippoorwillville—and Eddie Sackett, for all his devotion, was none of your pining and pinching lovers; Eddie was hungry. He asked the location of the dining room and was directed to a place called the grill. But the tariffs, as set forth on the menu, were calculated to bitt his appetite. Moreover, there was a waiter of an aggressive aspect who exhaled in evident and audible impatience as Eddie ran a forefinger down the price list, and this fussed the new guest. In his flustered state his eye finally fell, halfway down the card, on a fish dish—

fish *a la something*, with sauce *something else*—which alone, of all the items named, seemed reasonably priced.

He told the waiter he would take a piece of that, with coffee and bread and butter and fried potatoes. It was quite a long time before these things were brought and after they had been brought and he had eaten, a genuine shock awaited him. The total cost of the meal, as scribbled on the check, was the cause of this shock. To begin with, there were separate entries for the bread and the butter and for the cup of coffee and the potatoes. They threw those things in free with every meat order at the owl wagon or the Elite Restaurant back home; but it appeared that in New York they were charged for—and when he questioned the amount entered on account of the principal dish the waiter, producing the menu which, in accordance with the metropolitan custom, he previously had taken away with him, directed Eddie's attention to the figures plainly printed there. Eddie saw his error then; all things considered, though, the mistake had been, on his part, a perfectly natural one. The "20" hadn't meant twenty cents at all; it had meant twenty minutes.

In spite of the prospects of mounting outlays it became necessary for him to take another taxicab in order speedily to reach his next destination. After listening to certain involved and bewildering statements by the uniformed official who warded the hotel entrance, he had a conviction that, going afoot, the trip would eat up hours of his time. And he was in a hurry to get where he was going. At least, so he was at the moment of starting.

But as the taxi took him on his way, crisscrossing in and out of streets which roared to the traffic in them, a grave doubt as to the wisdom and the advisability of his adventure began to assail Eddie. Considering it, he almost forgot to view the shifting sights or watch for the spasmodic bounding of the meter. That same doubt had been living in the back part of his mind since before he started for New York; his advent into the city and a sudden daunting realization of the size of the city had quickened it into this present activity.

He had not written to his sweetheart of his intent. He had jubilantly designed to take her by surprise. Just what was to follow on the heels of the surprise—that he would say and do, what he would propose, what he would suggest, he did not exactly know. At no time of his exciting thirty hour journey had he known exactly. He had been content to let the immediate future take care of its own contingencies; and now here he was in New York, bound for her studio and due there shortly, and still with no definite plan of campaign—practically with no valid excuse for having come at all. Question marks began to pass before him in a succession of heavy curlicues.

What right had he, without invitation or encouragement, to bring his puny desires, his hopeless longings, his unimportant countrified self to her here in this place of her great endeavors and her greater aspirations? She would be busied in noble undertakings; engrossed inevitably in congenial and suitable companionships; and he—well, he was just plain inconsequential Eddie Sackett, forlorn and desperate from lovesickness. He was a fool and it was a fool's errand that had brought him and, for

him, humiliation and regret must lie at the impending end of the journey. Maybe it would be better, all round, if he turned round.

The jolt of stopping jarred him back to realities. The taxi had halted almost directly under some sort of overhead railway. As he stepped out, Eddie comprehended the surroundings. Dubiousness arising from a fresh cause—from a condition now and not from theories—assailed him. Was it possible that this neighborhood actually bordered on Fifth Avenue? It wasn't possible, surely!

"Are you certain this—is the right place?" he asked, making exact change to cover the amount of the fare as recorded. "Looks to me like we must have made a mistake."

"Same address wot you gimme," stated the driver. He flirted his thumb. "Dis is Sixth Avenoo and dere's your number." He derisively flipped the coins Eddie put in his hand; the absence of a tip annoyed him sorely. He set his car in motion and went briskly away.

Right enough, the proper number was set above a door directly in front of him; but the door opened into a small cluttered cigar store. Within, behind a showcase, with his back half turned to Eddie, was a dark, foreign looking man. He swung a broad and sullen face about as Eddie hesitated on the threshold.

"Vell?" he inquired. His voice seemed to come rumbling from his lower abdomen.

"I'm looking for Miss Leatrice Ember," said Eddie, "in care of a Miss Harriet Devore."

"Mush Devo?" With the least possible waste of physical energy the man motioned to the left. "Dwo vights up!"

"Which?—did you say two flights up?"

"Pshure!—don' you onderstan' Unglisch? Ouside und upp der stheps. Ring der doorbell on der landink ven you get dere."

So Eddie, more mystified than ever, went outside and up the steps indicated—remarkably dirty steps they were—mounting a well of semi-darkness until he came to the second of a pair of long narrow halls and to a door which faced him at the turn of the staircase. Set in the jamb of the doorway was a push button. There was a card tacked to the woodwork alongside the button but in that light he could not read what was written or printed on it. Something was wrong; this couldn't possibly be the place. He might be pretty ignorant of New York, but some things he knew intuitively. Still, since he had come this far he might as well go farther. On a venture he rang the bell.

Response was immediate. The door opened part way. A woman's shape showed rather dimly in the opening—Eddie was vaguely aware of the details, of much and very bright hair and a vivid kimono—and a woman's voice challenged him with:

"Well, what?"

"I'm looking for a Miss Harriet Devore's house," stated Eddie; "but I guess maybe—"

"Quit guessin' then, you got your wish."

"Could I see her a minute?"

"You're seein' her now." She seemed unnecessarily short. "And part of your minute is gone already. Make it snappy, Waldo!"

"Was there—is there a young lady named Ember—"

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"They was—and they is." She had such a disconcerting way of interrupting.

"Well, I just happened to be here in New York," said Eddie, his diffidence increasing, "and I just thought I'd drop in."

The suddenness with which she moved caused him to break off his speech of explanation. With a jerk she had opened the door wider so that a better light from within, where the gas was turned on even though it still was mid-afternoon, shone past her on him. Her voice had sharpened, too:

"Say, are you by any chance from down yonder, wherever it is, that she come from?" Seeing him now more distinctly, she answered herself: "Yes, you must be! And, say, are you a friend of hers?"

"Yes, I am."

"Good friend—know what I mean?—old-time friend from the old home town and everything?"

"Yes, of course."

"And still they's some'll say this religion stuff is the bunk!" This speech was not a question; it was an exclamation, rather.

"Which, ma'am? I don't know as I get you. You see, I've known her pretty much all my life and I——"

"You have? Then come on in here with me a minute."

She backed away and he followed her into what plainly was a room where the domestic side of living was consolidated with its social side, and she revealed to him a head of golden hair that was too good to be true—even Eddie could tell that—and a curiously pouched and mottled middle-aged face. With a puffy hand she closed the folds of her red robe at her throat and spoke rapidly:

"Say, listen: It's almost like as if you'd been sent—comin' today of all the days in the whole year. Here all day long, ever since this mornin', I've been wonderin' what they was for me to do. And then, bein' weak and all, she just breaks down and spills the whole thing to me. Seems like she come up here from that comic town of yours with the trick name, aimin' to set New York on fire paintin' pictures. And right away she falls for some sort of a greasy faker that promises to set her in right, and he skins her out of the biggest part of her jack—her money, I should say. And then he turns cold on her and gives her the air. And she comes down here and hires a room off of me, figurin' maybe she can live cheap and get by for a while doin' picture jobs for business houses or something. But the stuff she turns out is the limit and nobody don't want it—the poor kid! And what little money she's got left begins to run low on her. And she begins to get wise that she's been playin' a big game of pretend and it ain't got her nowhere—and never will, neither."

"June twenty-third was the last letter I got."

Seemingly without reason and all in one moment, the woman turned violent:

"Say, what the hell was you and all the rest of the people in that hick town thinkin' about anyway, leavin' her all alone here all this time? Wasn't they nobody nowheres that'd have the interest in her to find out about her?"

Eddie stiffened. In that same instant, too, he had found himself.

"She had me," he said stoutly. "She's got me now. Only, if anything serious has been the matter I didn't know a word about it."

"You're goin' to know about it in a minute. It'd be better for me to tell it to you first—much as I know—and then maybe that'll sort of save her feelin's. Listen: She's been sick, all right, but it ain't nothin' that a doctor could cure her of. It's

a different sort of medicine she's needin'."

"Where is she? Let me——"

"Just a minute. Lemme give you the dope first. I reckon it's news to you, ain't it, to hear that she's been strictly up against it? Well, she has, like many another like her is, in this man's town. She come here—let's see, it was back yonder along about the end of May it must 'a' been—and taken my small back room on this here same floor. I lease these here two top floors and rent them, furnished, by the week, get me? I ain't payin' her any mind except to collect from her every Sat'day night. These here lodgers don't mean anything to me; they come and go. I got my own worries, me doin' the best I can and just about gettin' by, what with some of these skates runnin' out on me every little while and bilkin' me out of my rent money and all. So all I notice about her is that she's quiet and ladylike and minds her own business, whatever it is. But here lately it seemed like she's been stickin' in her own room mighty close—well, that's all right, too. But this mornin' early I smelled gas 'scapin'—we burn gas here—and I traces it to her room and they she is, layin' in bed with the gas turned on full."

He seized her by her arms and shook her. He was altogether a new Eddie Sackett—masterful, white, tense, on edge to defend and to succor his womankind.

"She's all right? It was an accident? She's still here?"

"She's all right, so far as that goes. And she's still here. But it wasn't no accident, Mister—Mister——"

"Sackett—Sackett's the name, damn it!"

"Not no accident, Mister Sackett. She was fixin' to do a Dutch—get me? She wasn't far gone, though—the gas hadn't had a good chance yet to get her. A little fresh air and me workin' over her a spell and she comes right out of it. And then, bein' weak and all, she just breaks down and spills the whole thing to me. Seems like she come up here from that comic town of yours with the trick name, aimin' to set New York on fire paintin' pictures. And right away she falls for some sort of a greasy faker that promises to set her in right, and he skins her out of the biggest part of her jack—her money, I should say. And then he turns cold on her and gives her the air. And she comes down here and hires a room off of me, figurin' maybe she can live cheap and get by for a while doin' picture jobs for business houses or something. But the stuff she turns out is the limit and nobody don't want it—the poor kid! And what little money she's got left begins to run low on her. And she begins to get wise that she's been playin' a big game of pretend and it ain't got her nowhere—and never will, neither."

"With a girl like her in that fix, here in New York, they ain't but one of three ways out—she can go on the streets, or she can go back, licked, to the place where she come from, or she can bump herself off. And this kid was too decent to turn hustler—excuse me if I speak plain language, but that's the facts of it. And she was too proud to go back home and own up to everybody that knows her how she'd flopped. She just couldn't bear the thought of that, she told me; seemed like anything else was better than that. She can't bear the thought of 'em knowin' it, even now. So, what with her bein' so lonesome and down-and-out, and livin' for

months on bum food and not any too much of that, and never gettin' nowheres, she just decided to turn on the gas. She tells me she'd heard that gas was one of the easiest ways of croakin' they is.

"What I guess I should 'a' done, findin' her that way, was call a cop and get an ambulance sent for and have her taken off to the hospital or the station house or somewhere. But I didn't have the heart to do it. So, instead of attendin' to my own business, I been settin' here wonderin' where she was goin' to head in and what I was goin' to do about her myself—and then this here bell rings and in you walks—the first, last and only person that ever come astin' for her all the time she's been here. I'll say it again—it's like as if you'd been sent as an answer!" Suddenly a note of doubtfulness came into Miss Devore's voice. "But say, listen: Think you can get her to go back home, Mister Sackett? She's still dead set that her home folks ain't ever to know the truth about how she failed—says she'll die first, before she'll tell 'em. If she goes, you'll have to cover up for her, some way."

"Think I can get her to go? Huh, I'm going to take her! She's good enough for that town or any town. She's too good for this damn town!"

"Boy, listen: You and me live more'n a thousand miles apart, I guess, and our ways of thinkin' may be even further apart than that. But when you talk like that I got to hand it to you for bein' an all-right guy. But—but what'll she do when she gets home—without money and no way to earn her own living and not no kinsfolks to fall back on neither, from what she tells me? That's something for you and her both to think about."

"What does she need with money?" The manner of the protector and the provider competently was his. "I've got the money. I reckon I can make a living for two. My wife won't have to work."

"Your wife?"

"Certainly! We're going to be married

—married right here in your house, if you'll let us."

"If I'll let you? Say, listen, man, I'll give the bride away."

"Then let's go tell her!"

"Tell her what?"

"Tell her she's going to be married, soon as the minister and the license can get here."

"Say, for a guy from a rube town you're swift, ain't you? When I first saw you five minutes ago I didn't think it was in you, honest I didn't. How long have you two been engaged anyhow? She never mentioned bein' engaged when she was spilin' her troubles out to me this mornin'."

"A long time," said Eddie; "only she didn't know it. But I knew it all along. And say, Miss Devore, there's a reason why I'm specially glad you're going to let us get married here."

He half shut his eyes, the journalist, shaping in his mind the introductory sentence of the telegram he would send that night for publication in the ensuing issue of the Dentondale Weekly Sun-Independent: "Wedded: At the studio apartment of the bride, in Greater New York City, one block from Fifth Avenue, Whippoorwillville's most gifted daughter, and more lately one of Gotham's rising and successful young artists, Miss Leatrice Ember, to ye proud and happy scribe——"

He snapped back to roseate earth again.

"Well, what are we waiting for, Miss Devore? Let's go tell her."

The woman led the way for him out into the hall and down the hall to its darker and deeper end and there swung open a door for him to enter by. As the girl on the cot bed sat up and cried her joy at sight of him who crossed the threshold to take her in his arms, Miss Devore, turning her head, uttered, aside and to herself, what was at once a defiance, a boast, a triumphant pronouncement and, yes—by the blowzy Miss Devore's curious standards—a prayer:

"And still they's some'll say they ain't no God!"

Another story of Ben Ali Crisp, the newspaperman who uses human nature to detect crime, appears in February COSMOPOLITAN—Irvin Cobb's "The Thirteenth Degree."

The Eagle's Feather

(Continued from page 46)

of diplomacy, he sang the potency of love. Martha, standing against the wall, crushed her hands together and winked at the triumphant tears. They could not be controlled; she fled to the cold quieting spaces where, a tall pine between her and the house, she faced the grim late afternoon and throbbed with her human happiness. She stood out there in the bleak stretch of ground under iron mountains and steadily moving dark sky, like a torch. Winter had no power over her young blood, marching against him, bannered. But something else had power and all her blood stopped dead when Trent, coming softly under the branches, gathered her up against him—all of her, in tight arms.

He put his mouth to her ear and said: "Now! Martha."

"You mean?" she turned her head so that she could look into his eyes.

"I mean—Delila's waiting to see me

and Carey. I've asked her for five minutes first—alone. I'm going to tell her about us, Martha, our love. I'm going to ask her to give us a cabin for our own. I'm going to ask her if she doesn't want her foreman to be a married man."

Martha, as though suddenly she felt the cold, shivered.

"Not now," she begged him, "not now."

"Why not—you queer child?"

"I'm afraid."

"How I do love you! You small coward! Do you think I can wait another hour after all these hours of years?"

"And you want to go—now—and tell her, ask her about—me?"

"Yes. Now—now—now! Love has been choked down in me so long that I am eaten by it. It's got to have its way. Think how I've worked—God!—and sweated and frozen and held back. Now is the time. Winter's coming. Don't you feel that wind? Don't you smell the snow?

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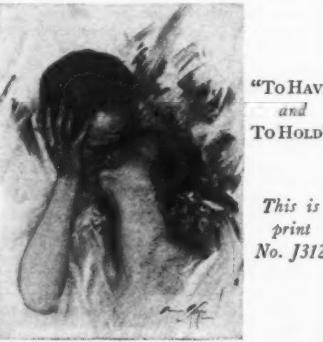
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I want you here, warm in my arms. Last winter, when you left me—"

"John, listen! You want to tell Aunt Lila now when she's given you the biggest reward in her power that you've done this work for just me! Please listen! You are her foreman, her—well—Dandy, who's so clever with the men, calls you her 'favorite.' This dinner's been given just for you. Today sort of winds up your work, what you've done for her, I mean. It's something she only dreamed of—being the boss of the whole valley—but you've made it come true. Now, when she's given you the best she has, you come to her and you say 'Let me marry little Martha,' just when she's thinking you all hers, for her plans, her future work. Oh, can't you see?"

Trent shook his shoulders stubbornly. "No—damned if I can see. Is she a generous woman, your aunt—or not?"

Martha struck his chest lightly with a small urgent hand. "John! John! Yes, she's generous, but you don't understand her—well, any woman—like I do. You see, she's awfully proud. You've done a lot for her and, what's more, for her ranch, which is just her child. What did you tell me you said to her—you're so smart!—when you asked her for a job, way back that first day?"

"I don't know. Let me go in, Martha."

She clung. "Wait! I can tell you what you said. 'I want to work for the biggest man in Bear Valley, and that's you.' Didn't she take you on because of that speech? Now you want to go and tell her, 'I was working, not for you and Circle R all this time, but for—Martha.' See!"

"Well, why not?"

"Because it'll be the end of you, John Trent." She looked away to the iron hills, moving her soft-haired head, restless and sad. Her eyes had lost their pretty love laughter. They were desolate. He took off his coat, put it around her and said: "Wait here, you darling fool, I'm going in."

She seized him then. "Don't do it, John! Or at least don't do it like that! Don't tell her the whole truth suddenly. You're clever. Can't you put it some way like this? You've worked for her—yes—you've devoted your whole strength and brain and feeling to her work. But you're a man and she's a woman. She's too high up for you to think of, but while you work and sort of—worship her, there's a little niece you kind of get into the way of telling how you feel towards the greater woman—so, gradually, being hopeless—"

Trent laughed and a snowflake touched his lips.

"All right. I can put it like that if you think that will make her happier. I think she's *too* great a woman to need such flatteries. My way would be—the whole truth."

"But I know her, John. I love her. Please do it my way."

She pulled herself up, both hands on his shoulders, and pressed her lips upon his.

"Anything for that!" he whispered when he could speak, and went away, alert and smiling.

Martha shrank into his big coat, drew herself under the tree and waited, pale now and tremulous. Suspense gave her a sensation of sickness. The fine snow began to sift across the ground, dusting the sage and the fence rails, the corner logs of the cabin only a yard away. She

could hear the murmur of Trent's voice, hesitant, groping, shy. She wondered if he were clever at such diplomacy as this. Abruptly he was silent. A chair scraped, Delila said a quick word or two. A door opened and shut. Martha, parting the branches, saw her aunt walking swiftly towards her. The eagle eyes flared soft and wet, the mouth trembled, the hands moved against each other. "Martha! Martha!" It was an urgent soft calling for help.

Martha stepped out and Delila clung to her, drew her back into the shelter of the swinging boughs and began to talk breathlessly.

"Marty, is it true? Speak—quick!"
"Y—yes—why, yes."

"O God!" The woman put her shaking fingers across her face. "Then it don't seem funny to you? Or out of all sense? You're so young and pretty, like a rose. I thought he must love you, just seeing you about. I didn't believe a man would work like he did except for loving someone. And why wouldn't it most naturally be you?"

Martha gasped once and stood still. Delila whispered on. "I'm near to fifty. They tell you, or I guess you just tell yourself, that you're too old. It's too late; leave the loving to girls. Be—just a ranchman, go on, get rich, be the biggest man in Bear Valley. And so you get older and harder and you don't care for the gray hairs coming in or the wrinkles round your eyes. But all the while way down you know that, being a woman, nothing in your life is good for anything but love. Don't you forget that, Marty, when your time comes! Love. Just love. Give it and get it, let the rest go by. You know I love you, girl."

"I love—you," Martha murmured.

"I guess you did it, Marty. He told you things. Hadn't it been for you he'd never have dared. Listen, when he came in to ask me for something I thought it would be for you. That'd be so natural. And I'd have told him, 'Sure, go ahead and marry her!' though it felt tight inside my heart. But Marty, he told me—Oh God—don't smile!"

"I'm not smiling, Aunt Lila," the girl whispered through her shuddering.

"He told me over and over again—about love. He hadn't dared—but he'd worked for me. He thought of you, he said, as something near to me—like me. Marty, there are men, clever men, that'd think more of all the everlasting love and worship and power I'd give them—wouldn't they?—than just of brown eyes and pink cheeks. There have been women who've loved great older men. When he was speaking, trying to tell me—I was scared. I felt like choking. Everything broke up inside of me. I told him to wait. I must go out and speak to you . . . another woman."

She started violently. "There he comes now. Martha! Martha!"

He strode up close and, turning his white face and steady eyes to Delila, he took Martha into his arms.

"I want her," he said quietly. "She's what I want. I was trying in a stupid, muddled, half lying way to tell you so."

Martha writhed against him, put up her hand to his lips. "Only because you think you can't get—her, John. Only because you think she's too great a woman for you."

Delila was looking swiftly from one to the other of them, a terrible change in her eyes.

"No, by God!" swore Trent and laughed out between the two tormented beings. "I want you for yourself. She's big enough to understand. I tried to put it the way you wanted, Martha, but that won't do." He held out his right hand to the eagle woman. "You're great and you're generous. I loved your niece. That's why I came here. I worked for you, yes, with all my mind, and I'm your man always, but I worked to win her—Martha. Now let me see the stuff you're made of, Delila Jameison."

She had a bleak gray face. She turned on her heel and strode away from them.

Trent laughed angrily. "Women like lies better than truth—even you, Martha. Kiss me. I'll forgive you for twisting me out of my own intentions."

"It's too late," Martha sobbed. "I'm afraid. You ought to take her, John. See, you were made to be a great man. She is the woman you ought to marry. I was trying to let you go."

"Stop trying!" he said sharply.

A girl came to the cabin corner, sheltered her eyes against the snow filled air and called: "O-o-o, Martha! Martha! Miss Jameison wants you."

Martha tore herself from Trent and ran across the open space into the house as a moth flies straight into fire. Trent moved a few steps and his body struck the fence. He stood with his head down, the light snow drifting across him, and remembered an azure evening, a groping mountain head, a star.

The air had grown warmer with the coming of snow. Behind him, round the corner of the building, the guests were leaving with sound of wheels and hoofs muffled. It was getting dark. Lights were showing in the cabin windows. Dishes were being washed, with rattling and laughter. He began to walk moodily to and fro, restless, uneasy and depressed. He wanted to stay out here in the swirling dimness until the women should have cried themselves out to each other's hearts. A sort of horror of emotion, of Delila Jameison, was upon him. He wondered if he were coward enough to be afraid. When, after an age of chill darkness, his summons came, he did not run, blindly brave, like Martha; he dragged himself over to the house on leaden feet.

He came into the living room and faced Delila. The long boards that had done service for the feast had been cleared of dishes and of draperies. They stretched, as bare and dry as years of lost labor, between the woman and himself. She pointed him to stand at the foot. He saw then that a dozen men, Dandy amongst them, were lined up on either side of her. All were standing except Delila, who sat with incandescent eyes in a drawn, beaked face.

Under her hand lay a roll of bills and a bag of silver money. She spoke with the voice of a dull saw driven through hard wood.

"Boys," she said, "I've been a fool, but it isn't too late yet to admit it. That young gentleman was too clever for me. Jeff Carey gave me a hint, but I was set in my own opinion. Today, before I made him foreman—likely he hadn't guessed at my intentions—there was found under



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Trent's bed hidden at the bottom of his box the money that I'd drawn to pay you fellows off with—the whole of it—for a season's labor. Today I found out he was planning to carry off my money and my niece. Lucky Jeff Carey found him out—and Martha talked to me . . . in time."

The men moved, and swore, boards creaking beneath their feet. They breathed rapidly. Trent, half closing his dizzy eyes, thought of a pack of dogs. The other method, Dandy's, was the safer, then. Keep your hand on the pulse of the people, be flattering, adroit, study the mob. Let the queen favor whom she will. The queen was speaking again:

"Now, since I've caught him with the goods and since we're none of us losers, I'm not going to hand him over to the law. I'm going to hand him over to you boys. It was from you he was trying to steal, wasn't it? Carry him down to the bunk house quietly—I don't want any rumpus on the way; Parson's turned in and Doc—but down there, when you're good and through with him, let him loose. He can travel down country afoot, like he came. Don't kill him. I'd suggest—for a second she lost control of the boiling tumult of pain, humiliation, jealousy that scalded her breast, and snarled, leaning towards him—"a quirt."

Trent spoke. "Where's Martha?" he asked quickly.

"Come back and ask me when you've had your licking," said Delila. "Maybe I'll tell you then."

Dandy and Scout took him by the arms and he walked between them quietly out into the snow. He remembered with a queer detachment some scene from medieval history read out to him when he was a child. Wasn't this always the end of the favorite, the queen's plaything—hard hands of a mob, torture, death? In the bunk house, with a sudden wrench, he freed himself and set his back against the wall. He spoke with his bland English smile.

"No use telling you men that I didn't take the money," he said. "Why should I, when I'd so soon be drawing a foreman's wages?"

"Ah, but you didn't know that when you took it—damn you!"

"Well, that's so. It's no use. Dandy's primed you against me. God knows he's been at it long enough. But this is a good country—a man's country. I ask you, because you're square, for fair play. You're a dozen to one. Let me fight. Let me take on, one at a time, your five best men. If, after they're through, there's anything left of me, will you let me off? I've worked with you for nearly two years—" There was a pause; he swallowed audibly. "Boys, I don't like the idea of a quirt." He looked about the room from face to face. "Isn't that fair?" he asked gently.

Well, they argued, he hadn't been a bad sort; he'd been a decent fellow enough; a fight was always worth looking at; five fights in succession, something of a treat. Perhaps the man in them half guessed at the woman in Delila's vengeance. Dandy struggled against the rising change of humor.

"What did the boss say? Hold him down on his bunk, a couple of you, and the five best men will take it out of him one by one with my quirt. That's orders."

No, sir—public opinion ran—thief or not, he's too good a man for that sort of thing. You can be the fifth to stand up to him, Dandy, and if after Scout and Buster and two others have finished with him, you can't quit him without sitting on his head, why, he's earned his getaway, I'll tell the world—

Dandy was clever enough to recognize finalities. He drew back his lips, sat down on the edge of his bunk, smoking and swinging his booted leg. The floor was cleared. John pulled off his flannel shirt and stepped into the middle of the ring; white and hard as marble with glinting eyes and a set smile. A little feverish child's hand seemed to be plucking at his heart. It was for Martha's hand he fought.

Delila sat at the end of her table and broke her heart slowly on a wheel. Trent's sufferings, she suffered. She was racked and, though she herself had sentenced him, the pangs twisted her out of her woman's stoicism. This man had tricked her, betrayed her, broken her pride. She had been head and shoulders above men. Hadn't she always ruled them—dealt them her favors or her punishments? It was for this bland-eyed young cat to steal the softness out of her with lying words, to melt her heart and then set into it his claws—laughing. He and Martha—kissing and loving and promising themselves success! Oh! she had been a fool, cheated, flattered, and at last made into a shape for eternal masculine mockery—an old maid who fancied herself loved by a young lover and smiled and beckoned and grimaced. God strike at the man's heart, cut it and scar it so that it never again beat to the tune of laughter! She lighted no lamp; the fire glow showed her grim stillness, crouched forward over her hands, nails sunk into her palms, eyes closed to endure her misery or opened wide to stare it down. They took a long time, those men, to beat the boy out of his consciousness. How noisy the night was with its whistling march of snow!

There had been no outcry. Surely she'd have heard, even through the storm, his voice of rage and pain, perhaps a cry for mercy. She'd like to hear that. What mercy had he for her? There would never be an end to this lashing on her naked pride.

She looked up because a cold wind, smelling of snow, blew across her and the fire jumped. By its sudden vigorous burning she saw Trent come across from the door slowly. He moved as though his limbs were half torn away from his body, and rested near her, his weight against the table edge on two bleeding hands. His clothes hung about him in strips, his face was torn and bruised. He said something three times with his lips before his words were audible.

"Where's Martha?"

She steadied her topaz eyes to look mercilessly into his dim and bloodshot ones.

"I sent her down the valley, on foot, the way she came."

He lifted his head a little and listened, with bruised lips apart, to the storm.

"On foot—in this?"

"Yes. She started after the last guests had gone. She can foot it now as far as Van Breuwen's before she drops. He'll take her in."

Again his bruised lips painfully shaped themselves to words.

"She told Van Breuwen she wouldn't marry him—you knew that?"

"Yes. There are a few things I did know."

"But you didn't know what he said to her." Trent drew a long breath and mustered strength for longer speech. "He said: 'You've lost your chance of being made respectable. I'll make you what your mother was.'"

Delila half rose. "He wouldn't dare say that!"

A film passed over her eyes. John turned away.

"I'll get my horse," he muttered.

"No more horses for you from Circle R, John Trent. You follow your girl on foot. But before you go, tell me your opinion of Jeff Carey's quirt."

John looked at her again. He used his smile.

"Miss Jameison, I fought my way into the boys' belief; so that they made me a present of a horse and saddle. If I were going to stay here as your foreman, I'd be a popular fellow now. They love a man's fists in this valley even if they hate his brains. Ask Dandy that question of yours about a quirt. He thought I was done after I'd laid out Buster and he came third—two turns ahead of his original intention. I cut the truth out of him with his own whip. He ate his lies."

Trent laughed shakily, drew the back of his hand across his eyes, smearing the lids red, and moved away from her, steady himself now and again by wall or chair. Just before going out he said, as if to himself:

"The girl has your blood. Because of that, I used to call her the eagle's feather—good by."

Delila flung up her head sharply, as though she had heard a calling in the distance. The eagle's feather . . .

She heard him go, went to the window and saw a dim mass moving away, accompanied by a long whirling phantom of snow which wrapped its arms about the horse and the body of the exhausted rider. Delila did not go back to her chair. She crossed to the inner door and stood gripping its knob. Fifteen minutes brought her to her decision.

She buckled her six-shooter round her waist, got into a coat of coyote skins, went down to the stables and, commanding no help, harnessed her sturdiest team to a buggy. She left them in the barn and returned to the house, where she knocked on the parson's door. He was presently awakened, a big, young, pleasant natured fellow, and received his orders meekly. Delila was easy to obey. "We've got to travel down country, storm or no storm," she told him. "It's a matter of life and death, or—if the words suit you better—of Heaven and Hell. Just your business, Mister Sin-Buster."

He protested once feebly when, on his way to the stables, the snow squall struck him almost off his feet, but Delila laid her hand on his arm and he found himself presently seated beside her in the buggy. The woman, a bear in her furs, backed the team and lashed them out and down the smothered road with their noses to the wind.

There was no man in Bear Valley who could get from a team so nearly all the

strength and cleverness that was in it as could Delila. Her horses, working against a stinging wall of wind and sleet, carried her and the bewildered Joseph Winger with sure speed. If they slipped, her hand was there to pull them up; if they lagged, her whip was searching and clever; if they reared, her iron voice sawed into their docile consciousness. She found herself straining her eyes ahead for a bent figure on horseback, though reason told her that Trent, if his will kept sense in his pounded body, must by now have reached his destination.

Van Breuwen's ranch house lay near the river at the base of a steep decline from the open ranges. Until a rider was just above it, it was as secret as a lair. Delila herself, though she knew her directions and distances half automatically, was startled when the buggy plunged down and she saw a snow-veiled light. The cabin by its situation was sheltered from the storm and as they descended the air grew softer and stiller, the noise dropped from their frosted ears. Here the snow fell straight and soundlessly through leafless aspens and the gray tangle of cottonwood. It had not drifted.

The team took itself into an empty corral amongst the trees, and Delila, with the aid of an electric torch, closed the gate on them and, hushing her companion, walked softly through the damp carpet of fresh snow towards Van Breuwen's visible window. It was uncurtained, and beckoning Winger to stand back and be silent, Delila crept up close to it and looked in.

The room, after her long blind driving, seemed ablaze with light; a stove glowed with red iron sides in one corner and a big glass lamp, unshaded, stared at her from a central table. Van Breuwen was standing near it in his shirt—its sleeves rolled up to the elbows showing his red hairy arms, its collar open across the red and hairy chest. He was moving his head to and fro and talking in a slightly accented voice that rumbled out, thunderous and reproachful. Martha was crouched up in a big elk-hide chair, her hands tightened into fists, her hair hanging in half dry wisps all about her neck and shoulders. Her face was shrunk into a mere symbol of resistance, its eyes narrow, its mouth set; no color, no flesh, nothing but the bones of her young will stiffened to a fight to the death. She was as fierce as a cornered wildcat but wasting not a breath in spoken defiance or in outcry. Delila's eagle blood must have thrilled at the sight of her . . .

At first the woman's eyes missed Trent altogether; then, starting, she distinguished him from the corner post of a great set of shelves to which he had been roped. He was conscious and every nerve and muscle was strained so evenly, so tensely, that he seemed statue-still. Tears were running down his battered face and every place the rope touched showed frayed and stained. His lips moved continually but Delila could not hear his voice above the noisy Dutchman's.

"I was goin' to keeb her here until she would decide to marry me. She coom to me, eh what? of her own will. I didn't fetch her. She coom flutterin' again' my door like a white moth, half dead with dat cold, dat snow. Didn'd I took her in and tread her fine, like a vather—what?—dry her and warm her and gif her a drink? Was I hurdin' her? No. You—voool! to

OSTEOPATHY

The Value of Symptoms as Indicators

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Symptoms have the same limitation. They are but indicators, dependable enough within certain limits. Yet alone they cannot identify the source of the trouble nor can they locate the cause.

For thorough, reliable diagnosis, the true physician must go far back of the surface indications pictured by the symptoms. It is not enough to know that trouble exists. It is necessary to know where that trouble is and above all why it has occurred.

Osteopathic Diagnosis is Thorough
In order to locate the cause that gives rise to the symptoms the Osteopathic physician brings every procedure of proven scientific value to bear upon the problem.

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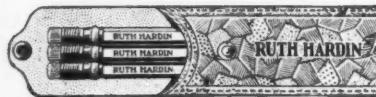
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coom and meddle with me. She'd haf stopped here safe wid me undil she hat made up her mind for herself to marry me. Pefore the snow haf gone she'd haf been ready—oh yiss, sure! Now what you done? You haf mate me mad. Now I will punish you. You stand dere and cry and fight while I teach dat girl nod to say no. She say—no to me vonce too often. She now goin' to learn how to say yes to one big strong man. Before the day coom she'll be prayin' for me to vetch parson—el wha?—prayin'!"

Delila stepped aside, beckoned to her companion and, loosening her pistol, walked quickly to Van Breuwen's door and flung it suddenly wide.

"Some prayers get answered, Pier, before they're prayed. Here's Martha's person now."

Van Breuwen staggered round on his heel. Martha screamed faintly. Trent paused in his soft, delirious cursing. The room became Delila's audience chamber. Big in her furs, and bigger in the fiery vengeful intentness of her will, she dwarfed even Van Breuwen. They seemed boys and girls, children, startled at some wicked play.

She spoke to the pastor over her shoulder in a voice like a saw singing through soft wood.

"Step across there, Winger, will you, and untie—the witness."

Winger obeyed, using his knife. His face was stern, pale and bewildered, but he was Delila's henchman. Trent fell forward from the post and the clergyman supported him to a chair where he drooped, half fainting, fighting against complete unconsciousness. Martha rose to go over to him when Delila spoke again and halted her.

"You got the marriage service by heart, Joseph Winger?"

"Yes, ma'am. I think so."

"Then pull out that table there and stand beside it. Marty, step up in front of him. Do like I tell you—don't you see my gun?"

Martha moved over, white and light.

"Now we got our witness"—she glanced at Trent—"and we got our bridegroom. Hold on, Van Breuwen, I got you covered. Just you wait for orders, savvy? John Trent, you were held for witness, weren't you? Have you got the strength to step up there near Winger?"

He pulled himself together and wavered to the parson's right. He looked at Delila with his dazed, half comprehending eyes.

"Now, Van Breuwen, you come along with me. Read out the service, parson."

The clergyman stammered. "W—which—who—who am I marrying, Miss Jameison?" he asked, flushing and dubious.

"You are marrying my niece, Martha Jameison, to the man she's chosen."

Martha slipped forward, was caught up by Trent and stood there, swaying, while the parson spoke.

Except for the rather melodramatic circumstance that Delila kept Van Breuwen covered with her gun, the service went with conventional smoothness to its close. The bridegroom's responses were whispered and

the bride's tremulous, but there was no hesitation or doubt in the faint, determined voices. Delila, eyes and pistol on the Dutchman, stepped forward sideways and gave her niece away. The pastor raised his hand: "In the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost—I pronounce you man and wife. What God hath joined together let no man put asunder—"

"Amen," said Delila and bent down her head.

"Now, Winger," she said brusquely after the pause during which they all heard the tapping of snow and the snapping of the red hot stove, and looked at each other with strange eyes, "you take this six-shooter of mine and march Van Breuwen into the store room—give him some blankets—and lock him in. Afterwards I'll drive you back to Circle R. I figure we can just about make it before we're drifted in. It's near daylight now so we can make time."

After Van Breuwen's enforced departure—he seemed crestfallen and resigned—Delila spoke more softly.

"John Trent, you take your wife into her bedroom. There's near about nothing left of her."

He led the girl to a door, watched her creep through, closed it gently and looked across the room towards Delila.

She had sat down in the big elk-hide throne near the table end. She looked pale and old and tranquil.

"John," she said, "I never did believe that lie of Dandy's."

He was silent, leaning against the door.

"John, I've got a wedding present for you—Van Breuwen's ranch. You're coming into Circle R as my partner. As soon as the snow's melted enough for holding a business meeting, we'll fix up the arrangements. Meanwhile I'll leave Van Breuwen here—you can have my gun, though I don't think he'll bother you any—until you can send him down country with his team and his belongings. The personal stuff, you know, is rightly his. He's a mean actor but I'm sort of sorry for him." She sighed. "You'll have a good home down here, you and Martha, after she's had a chance to tidy it up."

She began to stroke her silk skirt with one dark and restless hand.

"Likely," she said in a low voice, very patient, "I'll learn to love your children, John . . . eagle's feathers . . ." Moisture filled the long wrinkles in the corners of her lids.

He came over to her and, after standing before her a moment, he bent his knee, took up one of the restless hands and bowing over it touched it lightly with his lips. Then he rose and walked backward, gracefully, gravely, forgetful of himself as he had been once in the presence of an august Personage. Just before he went in to Martha he straightened to look up at her again.

She sat erect, the right hand across the left, which he had kissed; her eyes, haughty and wistful, were looking far and away beyond him as though they could see across the mountain barriers to some conquest vaster than any of which in her narrow valley she had dreamed.

*Don't miss the fresh, winsome love story of the days of America's youth in February COSMOPOLITAN—
"The Last Witch," by Haute Tarkington Jameson.*

The Bear Trap

(Continued from page 94)

running the point of his knife in at the shoulder and turning back the corners and catching them between his strong thumbs and forefingers. The skin came away as he pulled, came away clean and intact. Then with a quick double sweep of the knife he removed the backbone and cut away the belly, leaving only the white flaky cutlets which he dropped on his hot skillet greased with bacon fat.

She watched him admiringly as these cutlets browned in the steady heat and an odd pang of hunger took possession of her. She watched him with a vague wonder in her eyes as he made ready the meal and pushed the rough table over close beside the bunk and propped her up against the shack wall padded with a couple of wolf skins. For the first time they ate together. Yet they talked little.

When he had finished, Holgar got up and started for the door, for he had made it a rule, since she had been in the cabin, never to smoke there.

"Would you mind not going for a little while?" she asked, still leaning back against the gray wolf skins.

He put his pipe in his pocket and sat down again. But the heaviness of his face did not make it easy for her to say what she had wished to say.

"Do you live here all the time?" she asked, after a silence.

"Yes," he acknowledged in his non-committal bass.

She looked slowly about the shack, from the leather-hinged grub box above the water pail to the trap door that opened on the cool-hole beneath the floor. It seemed miraculous to her that life could be so simplified. The accepted primitiveness of it all puzzled her. She was even more puzzled, however, by the row of books above the pegged array of mink traps and snowshoes and stretching frames, and the incongruous "college eight" photograph on the wall above the bunk.

"Do you like it?" she finally asked.

"I put up with it," was his response.

"But what have you got?" she found the courage to inquire. "What have you in your life?"

His morose eye studied her face.

"What have you?" he countered.

She compelled herself to laugh, at that. But she was soon solemn again. For she found certain difficulties in framing an answer to that question. What, after all, did she have in her life? What, above and beyond the nonessentials of existence, could she claim as distinctively her own? It was an unformulated dissatisfaction with everything about her that had driven her from the city, that had made alluring the thought of a stabilizing month in the North Woods. For already, that spring, she had felt something sharper than the steel jaws of a bear trap. She had seen her trust in her husband snap like a bead string. And she had asked for solitude, for the pine woods and the peace she had always loved, in which to reconstruct her shaken world.

She turned and studied Holgar, shadowed and silent beside her. He, too, had betrayed her. She had been made to suffer this time, not through a man's deceit, but through his cruelty. It dis-

turbed her to find that she was still seeking some extenuating source of that cruelty, some secret injustice of an earlier day to excuse a strong man's weakness. For the fixed impression she now got from Holgar, in the face of his foolish timidiies, was one of strength. And she was disturbed still again at the thought that she might in some way forgive cruelty from the strong while she stood unable to forgive deceit in the weak.

"I don't suppose it matters, after all," she said out of the silence that had fallen over them.

He asked her what she meant.

"I mean, it's not what we have that counts, but what we are. That's what decides whether we're to be happy or unhappy."

"I guess it's what other people do that counts most," said Holgar, staring out of the open door.

"Is that what brought you here?" she asked, struck by the pathos of the browned face in the strong side light.

He did not look at her. But his color deepened.

"I was thinking of you," he retorted. "And what I did to you."

"Let's not go back to that," she said, quietly enough, but with a deepening of her own color.

"I can't help it," he protested with an inadequate gesture of his huge hands. "But I'll pay for it, all right!"

"How?" she prompted, stirred more than she cared to be.

"I used to like to be alone," he said. And as he spoke he looked heavily about the neat but blank walled shack.

"Well?" she prompted, breathing more quickly than before.

"It'll be different," was all he said as he got up from his chair.

She sat with knitted brows as he strode out of the shack. When he came back an hour later she asked for a needle and thread and her clothes.

He brought her the bale of neatly folded clothing without speaking.

"I ought to be able to get into these in a day or two," she said as she shook out the garments and looked them over.

"I suppose so," was his listless response.

"Surely I can get around a little now," she argued.

"I suppose so," he repeated as before. Then he took a deep breath and added: "I'll make you a pair of crutches tomorrow. They'll help."

She thanked him absently, and then asked: "How long will I have to use crutches?"

"A few weeks," he told her.

"And then?" she prompted.

"Then I'll have to take you back," he said to the russet range into which he was stoking stovewood. But the flat deadness of his voice prompted her to lean a little lower over the garment seam which she was sewing together.

III

THE days grew warmer as spring crept over the land, and the northern silences grew vocal with the twin business of migrating and mating. When Adrienne



At last she found out

Something was amiss. Her animation and buoyancy, once so marked, were giving way steadily, it seemed, to lassitude, indifference and depression.

In despair, she determined to take careful inventory and try to regain her failing powers.

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A TONIC FOOD



Wheelock was able to creep out into the open again she found an odd lassitude taking possession of her. It was not altogether peace that came to her, and it was not altogether unrest. But as she went on with her sewing, seam by seam and garment by garment, she wondered more and more about the world that had forgotten her.

It was a week later, as she sat alone in front of the shack, drying her hair in the sun, that an emissary from that world broke in on her solitude. It was Michel Pecotte, the halfbreed, on his way to the Post. And she resented the silence of his approach just as she resented the pointedness of his stare.

"Where heem?" asked Pecotte, with his squinting old eye on the dooryard tracks.

"He's away," retorted the woman, with an echo of her visitor's impassivity.

"Heem back soon?" demanded Pecotte with another of his intent stares.

"Yes."

"You hees woman?"

Adrienne Wheelock flushed painfully. "No," was her sharp retort.

The *metis* grunted.

"How long you stay wit' heem?" he asked.

The color by this time had gone from the woman's face. "I was hurt in the woods," she explained, "and he took care of me."

Again the *metis* grunted. She hated that animal-like and half derisive sound. She also stood vaguely in fear of it, for it seemed to typify far off difficulties which would some day have to be faced.

"Gimme leetle taback and I go!" announced Pecotte.

She turned and studied the immobile old face. Then she took up the crutches padded with rabbit skin and made her way into the cabin. The *metis* said nothing as she returned with a handful of Holgar's tobacco and passed it over to him.

She watched him, equally silent, as he went down to the river, stepped into his canoe and paddled away. But her brow was so clouded with thought when Holgar returned that he was prompted to study her face.

"Has anything happened?" he asked. He had scant need for putting that question, since his trained eye had already read the history of that morning's intrusion. He had read it in the gum rubbed from Pecotte's canoe on one of the shore stones, in the fresh moccasin prints on the path, in the crutch prints that met the footsteps of the visitor.

"An Indian came here this morning," she explained.

"That was Pecotte," acknowledged Holgar. Then he stopped short. "Did you send out word by him?"

"No," she replied, without meeting his gaze.

And nothing more passed between them, at the moment. That night after supper, however, as they sat watching the sunset from his rock shelf above the river, she told him that she was able at last to walk without her crutches.

"That means you want to go back," he said, staring into the pine-fringed west. She sat silent, arrested by the tremor in his voice. He impressed her as being like the land which had engulfed him, sorrowful and silent and touched with mystery.

"That's the odd part of it," she confessed. "The part that rather frightens me. I've got to go back, of course, but I've no impulse to go. It almost terrifies me to think what the last month or two has done to me."

"What has it done?" he asked.

"It's given me time to think certain things out. And I've been wondering why women are so fond of Sèvres and cinnamon toast and azure silk and cut glass things with gold stoppers."

"They'll seem essential enough when you get back to them."

"It'll be different, of course," she said in a slightly flattened voice.

He half closed his eyes. "You know how it'll be here when you've gone," he surprised her by saying.

"How will it be?" she asked, quietly enough.

He uttered the one word "Hopeless!"

"Why should it be different?"

"It'll all be empty."

"Empty of what?"

"Of you!" he asserted with his first show of vehemence.

She seemed to be thinking this over. "You mean empty of companionship," she corrected. "And I'd call companionship essential to life, in a country like this."

He neither agreed nor disagreed with her. So she finally found the courage to ask:

"Why did you ever come here?"

"That's something I've never talked about."

"But talk about it to me."

"Why should I?"

"It may explain something I need to know."

"It will," was his curt retort. "It was back in your world, in November, after I'd been moose hunting up in the Temagami country; I'd been married the June before. I got back unexpectedly. There was a man there. The bedroom windows were quite high, and I threw him through one of them. His neck, they found, had been broken by falling on the terrace balustrade. I waited until things were settled, as much as such things could be settled. Then I came away."

The woman beside him did not speak for a long time.

"So that's why you hated me!" she said at last.

"I don't hate you," was his solemn reply. "It's the world you come from."

"Where we were very much in the same boat," she amended under her breath. Then she broke the silence by saying aloud: "Will Pecotte tell them I'm here?"

"I'm afraid so," he acknowledged, though he wondered, a moment later, as to the reason for the half tragic and half trivial twist of her interlocked fingers beneath her knees . . .

Holgar, however, was not in error as to the tendencies of Michel Pecotte. That traveler out of the North, it is true, had not a great deal to tell. But an audience had been prepared for him. A woman of wealth and position in the world had dropped out of life. The wilderness had sent back no echo of her; frantic searching parties had found no trace of her; and Erskine, Wheelock's field engineer at Coppermine Camp, still brooded hour by hour over the wording of the ominous message that must eventually go to his manager in the East. But the advent of Pecotte, with

his brief statement of having stumbled across a white woman in the wilderness, took that unpalatable task out of Erskine's hands. The news traveled by "moccasin telegraph" from the Post to Buckhorn Landing and from there to the rail head, where, dramatized to self-justifying dimensions, it was put on the wires and in due time made its appearance in a New York evening paper. There the abrupt information of how a millionaire's wife had survived fierce combat with a wounded bear and had lived in the woods on bark and roots until rescued by a sourdough trapper who had taken her into his home brought Robert Wheelock to his office telephone, where his pale face grew still paler as he called for a time table, sent a hurried message to his valet, ordered a taxicab and caught an evening train for Montreal.

He was more composed the next day as he thundered westward on the Overland Limited, but an undefined sense of betrayal mingled with a sense of remoteness once more took possession of him as he turned north on a rough logging line, carefully outfitted at the rail head, and struck overland for Coppermine Camp. Only fools, he felt, went into a country like that. And his errand, he remembered, was as foolish a one as a man could undertake.

Yet as he approached the Wapiti River country he became less openly restive. He was given to long silences and found little to say to his guides. He seemed to have a great deal to think about. And when they told him they were within a day of Holgar's territory he ordered them to make camp while he took a canoe and went on alone. With him he took a blanket and food. And Pierre Cat, the head guide, noticed that he also took along with him one of the rifles.

Wheelock's progress down the river seemed an advance into unreality, a world of amber colored waters and reaches of green-tinted gloom twining through receding hill tiers fringed with pine tops. His distaste for the territory increased, even before he came to a still lonelier area of burnt-over stumpage. They spoke of it as the "New North," he remembered, yet it impressed him as a land not new but sorrowful and immense and infinitely old; the oldest formation known to the geologist, he idly recalled. He could not imagine anyone willingly living in such a country. Even the river along which he advanced began to impress him as a waterway leading to the phantasmal end of a phantasmal earth, a stream of dull mystery creeping off into the heart of darkness.

Wheelock did not hurry. A second wind of craftiness had come to him by this time, immured in his black joy of turning over fragment after fragment of unpalatable information on which he had stumbled along the way. He wanted to come on them at dusk, at nightfall, when they would be least looking for a visitor.

He tried to be cool about it all, but he was more excited than he had anticipated. He even fell to dramatizing the meeting with his wife and that other man; that other man about whom he could not now think without a hardening of the jaw muscles. And when that meeting came about, he intended to be the master of the situation. Life had confronted him often enough with problems more complicated than this one, and he had engineered his way out to success. He even nursed a

growing impatience to see the thing brought to an issue.

Yet he was wary enough in his approach to that culminating moment. He watched the sun go down behind the black fringe of pine and as it went it seemed a sun that had gone out for all time. The desolation of the country more than ever depressed him. But he refused to be overawed by the barbaric.

He had intended to hide his canoe upstream and effect a secret approach on the cabin in the woods. But he suddenly realized, as he rounded a bend in the river, that it was already too late for any such maneuver. For on a rocky bluff overlooking the water, silhouetted against the sunset, he could see a man watching him. He sat motionless as he drifted on with the current, staring at that sentinel figure as he approached it, resenting its silence and its inalienable air of dignity. It seemed gigantic, in the clear northern twilight, grotesquely gigantic, on that enthroning black rock that thrust it up in clear profile against the vivid orange and green of the paling sunset. Yet neither man spoke.

Wheclock glanced down at the rifle lying along the bottom of his canoe. He could, without trouble, send a ball into that sullen black figure. But he could not construe this as any final solution of his problem.

The man, after all, was subsidiary. The vital factor was the as yet undisclosed woman beyond the man.

Wheclock beached his canoe and climbed to the top of the rock bluff, taking his rifle with him. He resented the Titan-like immobility of his enemy, who did not even turn as he approached. He resented the fact that he had to circle about that silent and somber figure, like a sheep dog circling about a mastiff.

Then the two men stood face to face in the twilight. They stood for several moments without movement or speech. The newcomer spoke first.

"Where's my wife?"

He uttered the three words quietly enough, yet they came with a savagery which was not to be mistaken. The other man, however, merely moved a massive head towards the cabin half hidden in the pine trees above him.

"How long has she been there?" demanded Wheclock, with his narrowing eyes on the barricaded big face.

"Nearly two months now," was the final response. Yet that response was uttered in a voice so quiet that the newcomer found something maddening in its assured tranquillity.

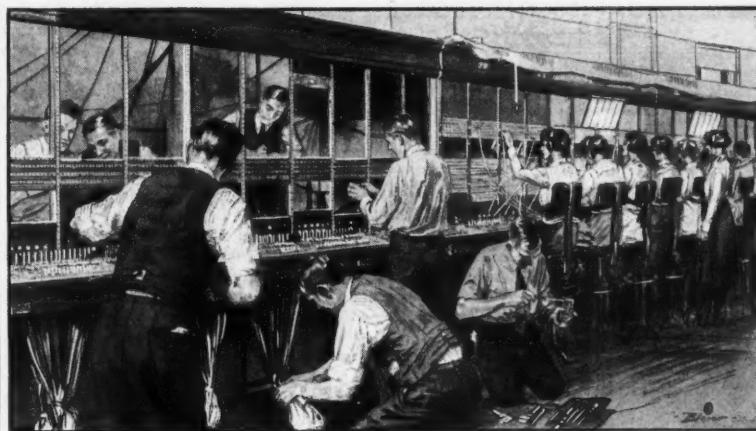
"What have you got to say about this?" he cried out, with his jaw squared.

"A great deal," was the still unruffled reply.

"I guess you ought to have!" contended the other.

Wheclock, for all his anger, found it hard to speak. He too had a great deal to say. But he sensed limitations to the manner in which it might be said. And it was betrayal touched with exasperation that sounded in his voice as he cried out: "What have you done to her?" *

The other man stood silent a moment. "What I ought to be shot for," he said with gesture of helplessness that seemed grotesque from a figure so huge. "But I want you to understand how it happened."



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rested on the rough flannel of the man's shirt she had been mending. But her eyes, all the while, were fixed on her husband's face.

"And what did you expect when I got here?" he demanded, hot with the knowledge that she was in some way throwing him on the defensive.

"That rests with you," she said with her maddening quietness.

"Well, it's a sweet mess for a white man to be dragged into. It's a sweet pill to swallow, with half the world knowing your wife's been——"

She stopped him with a gesture.

"I didn't expect you to feel sorry for yourself," she said, with her first show of spirit.

"You couldn't expect me to feel sorry for you!" he countered, with the last of the color gone from his face.

She sat back, studying him once more.

"Listen," she said at last. "All that life means to us, all our future happiness, stands like a lighted candle on this table between us. It must not and cannot be handled like this. If it goes out, it can never be lighted again."

Her sustained impassiveness was only fuel to the fire of his anger.

"For two months you've lived along with this bushwhacker and then you mouth about the delicacy with which the subject must be mentioned. It isn't a matter of lighting candles," he cried out, "it's a matter of commonsense and decency. For two months you have lived in this shack with a man who isn't your husband, and when your husband turns up you warn him to watch his step! And I'll tell you right here and now that most husbands wouldn't take the trouble to turn up!"

She stared at him with a slow look of illumination creeping into her face. She was able, at last, to articulate the scattered skeleton of all her earlier distrust.

"And what do you propose doing with me?" she finally asked.

He sat down, at that, as though she had thrust on him a burden that was too heavy for him. He sat for a long time, with his face working. Then he looked up at her.

"I propose getting you out of here," he said in a steeler voice than she expected.

"Do you mean you're taking me back?"

"Yes, I'm willing to take you back," he finally conceded.

She closed her eyes, to absorb the enormity of his mistake.

"That is good of you," she said with embittered tranquillity. But her face saddened, involuntarily, at the thought of the gulfs that yawned between them.

"This time—but never again!" he qualified, resenting her passiveness before a situation which still impressed him as calamitous.

"When are you taking me?" was her next question.

"Tonight," was his short reply. She sat studying the flannel shirt, the abominably conspicuous flannel shirt, under her linked fingers.

"Where's Holgar?" her husband heard her ask.

"What's Holgar got to do with this?" he barked out.

"I'd like to see him before I go," his wife explained.

"I guess you've seen about enough of that man! You've——"

But her gesture once more brought him to a stop.

"I think there's something you don't understand," she said after a moment's silence. "Something about Holgar and me. Do you realize just why I've been here nearly two months?"

"The bald fact that you've been here ought to be enough for most people."

"But the fact isn't as bald as you may have believed. It's mixed up with other things, like most of the facts of life."

"Well, it's not the sort of mixture I want a wife of mine to be in!" he cried out at her in a hardened voice. The hostility of his face held her silent for a moment or two.

"You don't think this man-cares for me in any way, do you?" she demanded. Her husband's embittered glance swept slowly about the four crowded walls that enclosed her.

"I can't see much evidence to the contrary!" was his deliberate retort. And again their glances locked.

"But when I'd been lost for two days and came to his door, he turned me away. He refused to help me. He did even worse than that. He let me walk into a bear trap."

"He what?" cried Wheelock, incredulous.

"He stood and let me walk into a trap he had set for a wild animal. That broke my leg and left me helpless."

Wheelock stood up, his face strained. Yet he spoke quietly enough.

"You mean he deliberately let this happen?"

"I'm better now," observed the woman. Her statement seemed inconsequential to the man confronting her.

"Then by God he'll get a dose of his own medicine!" Wheelock bit out with a quiet savagery that brought the woman's eyes back to his face.

"That's impossible!" she said in little more than a whisper.

"We'll see if it's impossible!" was the other's embittered cry.

"But that would make you worse than he was," she reminded him.

Her husband stopped short. "You're not arguing a case for this half witted bushranger, are you?"

"No, it was more for you."

"For me?"

"Yes, I was hoping for bigness from you," she said as she relinked her fingers over the flannel shirt.

"Then, by God, you'll get it! I've played second fiddle in this situation just a little too long. You seem to have a weakness for the cave man stuff, so I'll give you what you want. Get ready!"

"For what?" she asked, her breath quickening.

"To come back with me," he retorted.

"When?"

"Now! At once! As soon as you get together what you need!"

She laughed for the first time, though not without bitterness.

"I've nothing to get ready," she explained to him. "All I brought with me was my rifle."

His gesture was one of impatience.

"Then get that," he commanded as he went to the door and looked out.

In silence she put on her hunting coat and cap and took down her rifle from the two wooden pegs in the wall where Holgar had placed it. Her husband was staring

at the iron bear trap that hung in the farther corner of the room. And she took her turn at looking out into the night.

"Can we travel in darkness like this?" she asked.

"I'm not as helpless as you seem to imagine," he retorted as he waited for her beside the open door.

She noticed, as he followed her outside, that he had forgotten his rifle, but she said nothing about it as they groped their way down to the river bank.

"Shall I come in my canoe?" she asked.

"No; you come with me, in mine," he promptly announced. But he stopped short before he stepped into the canoe after her.

"I've forgotten my rifle," he said.

"Wait here for me."

Several times, as he climbed the hill again, he waited and listened and peered about through the gloom. Then he made his way back to the cabin. Once inside, he swung the door shut. After a quick inspection of the room he took down the heavy bear trap and placed it within three paces of the door. Then, with the ax he found in the cabin corner, he drove the bit of the trap's anchor chain deep into the heavy timber, drove it until the head was well sunk beneath the surface. He next gave his attention to setting the trap. To do so took all his strength. Sweat stood thick on his face when he had finished. Then he so placed the rough chairs and table that they marked off a narrowing alley, an alley which led directly over the set jaws of steel. Anyone moving in through the darkness from the door to approach the bed bunk would have to pass over those waiting jaws. Before he put out the two guttering candles, however, Wheelock took up the man's shirt on which his wife had been sewing, studied it, and then with infinite care draped it lightly over the outspread iron jaws.

He was composed enough by the time he had returned to the canoe and pushed out into midstream. He was grateful for his wife's silence. She did not speak, in fact, until he had paddled a mile and more through the uncertain light.

"Why did you nail up that cabin door?" she finally asked.

"What made you think I did?" he countered.

"I heard you."

"That wasn't a door being nailed up," he said with his little laugh of triumph, "I was doing something quite different."

"What was it?"

"I was getting a dose of his own medicine ready for that backwoods Romeo of yours!"

She did not seem to understand him for several moments. Then even in the uncertain light he could see her shoulders stiffen against the canoe thwart in front of him.

"The trap!" she said in a thin whisper of comprehension. But there was no further sound or movement from her.

She sat ominously silent until Wheelock, an hour later, announced the futility of trying to make further headway in the darkness. He was tired, and they could land and sleep comfortably enough until daylight left things easier for them.

She watched him as he made ready a sleeping place by spreading jack pine on a sloping rock shelf.

"There's only one blanket," he observed. "So it'll have to be a case of sharing again."

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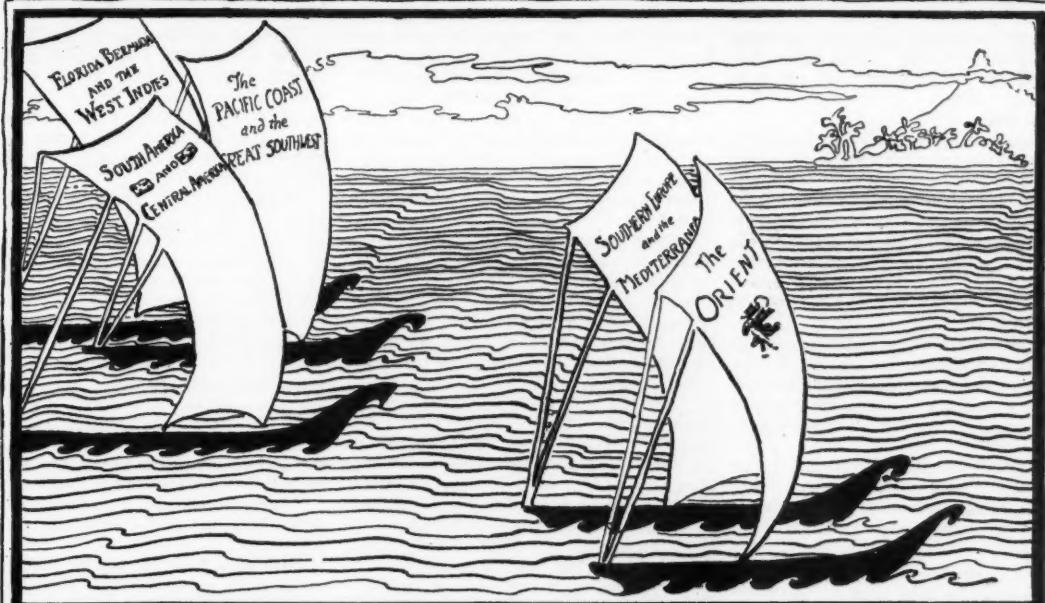
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brought the victim around. She opened her eyes to discover Bush Thorndyke, white and helpless, staring down at her the while her employer, Ad Hyman, feverishly massaged her hands. A most amazing thing then occurred. Miss Donaldson snatched her hands away and spoke to Hyman as follows:

"You dirty dog!"

Hyman sat back upon his heels; his mouth fell open; then, attributing the outburst to hysteria, he spoke soothingly. But the diminutive beauty would not be soothed. "I've got your number, you—you *therpent!*" With one small palm she smote the producer a resounding smack upon his full olive cheek. "Buth! Buth!" she wailed and held out her arms to Thorndyke.

Thorndyke knelt gracefully beside the couch and gathered her to his bosom. He moved slowly, as if through force of habit he timed his action to the cranking of a camera. Over his shoulder he explained:

"We didn't intend to announce it, but Miriam and I were married a month ago."

"Ach!" Hyman recoiled, his eyes blazed. "There goes fifty thousand off 'The Gutter Lily'! And after I've spent a fortune advertising her as the Public's Darling. Co-starring with her *husband!* Why, it's like announcing that Jackie Coogan is a married man. Isn't business rotten enough without trying to run the fans out of the theaters?"

Miss Donaldson had won fame by her ingénue portrayals, by her playing of placid sixteen year old innocents, but she qualified now as an intensely emotional actress. She withered Hyman with a glare of hatred. "You thnake in the grath! Wait until I tell Buth! Wait!"

"I must warn all of you," gravely announced the professor, "that the Voice is pitiless. How could it be otherwise when it speaks only the Truth? Perhaps some of you fear disappointment, bad news—"

"It wathn't bad newth: it wath good newth," declared the bride of a month, the "Gutter Lily." "It—thaved my happineth." She bowed her head upon Thorndyke's chest, in the exact spot where she had bowed it so many times for the slow fade, and wet his shirt front with her tears.

"She seems to be all right again, so let's go on. There's something I simply *must* know." It was Stella Green of the expensive spine who spoke, and when others shared her eagerness the sitting was resumed.

This time it was Madame Turin who was summoned from the circle. "You may take the vase in your arms," Tremblay told her. "Let us be sure there are no concealed wires—no trickery of any sort."

Reverently the singer lifted the relic and bore it to her chair. There was nothing hysterical about Turin; hers was the blazing ardor of a zealot. "I am waiting!" she declared in her full, round voice.

Again came the eerie whispering from the shadow world, but this time those sitting near the great artist could distinguish occasional words and phrases, and their scalps tingled

" . . . glorious gift of song prostituted . . . this vile and degrading employment . . . multitudes waiting to acclaim . . . Paris, the entire Continent in grief at your desertion . . . "

"Yes, yes, but my contract?" Turin

cried in tones of panic. "It calls for four more. I—it's—oh, that is *impossible!*"

The birring continued for some time. Closer the songbird clutched the urn; she strained it to her bosom; her eyes were tragic. She questioned it, she argued, she protested. Hers was indeed a demonstration and she made the most of it. "Thais!" she cried at last. "But it was promised to another . . . I—understand. It is the climate. I've noticed the change . . . It will go and never return? . . . There's more money in opera . . . I—I thank you."

It was plain that the singer had experienced a great shock; nevertheless she withheld it nobly. Like one in a trance she returned the vase to its guardian. Breathlessly she told him: "This was a priceless privilege. Priceless! And a superb demonstration! It has changed my entire career, my life."

Next the vase called for Wilbur Kent, most popular of the Notable Film Company's directors; then "Red" Courtney of the Screen Writers' Guild, and Stella Green the last of the Gins-Art stars. Several others were likewise summoned.

Despite this unique opportunity of learning something about the spiritual world, about the beatitude of their departed relatives, it seemed that each and every one of these earnest students of the psychic had propounded questions concerning their own material selves—questions of a purely business nature. Their yearning to prove the existence of life after death, strangely enough, had taken the form of requests for professional counsel—the future indeed concerned them, but their own immediate futures only. That the Voice conversed in terms of dollars and cents, that it discussed salaries, contracts, renewals and options indicated that the Rajah's spirit was not only endowed with a god-like patience but also that it possessed an amazing familiarity with the film business. Much "inside" information passed between it and them and no more convincing evidence of a supreme intelligence could have been adduced.

The first group of sitters became enthusiastic converts and the library rapidly filled up for the second show.

Ad Hyman was among the first to receive a message and evidently it was not a pleasant one. He said little, but he perspired freely and even after he had gone back to his seat he continued to mop his face. He was no longer a skeptic but a worried if reluctant apostate.

As for Ginsberg, when his turn came he talked frankly to the vase—upon banking matters. "So? . . . It ain't possible?

. . . Listen, I don't care if it is the biggest group in Wall Street. Why should I let 'em put in four hundred thousand dollars when already we got more money than we need? . . . Six percent, eh? . . . Sure! And I don't know if I want to take on any more stars, either, with salaries coming down every day . . . Wait! Don't tell me!"

Whatever it was the Vase told him, Ginsberg was astonished. He could barely credit the good news and when he had finally finished his spirit interview he announced to his hearers:

"Maybe it's a fake, but for what I just heard I wouldn't take a hundred thousand dollars, cash." When he reseated himself,

he was seen to nod and to smile and to compute upon his fingers. He was heard to mutter strange and cryptic words.

The last guest had gone. In Ginsberg's dining room was laid out a midnight spread, largely liquid. At the table sat the producer himself, Jimmy Lord, Moe Apple and Joe Thomas; before them was a stack of envelopes and sheets of note paper. These Sol and Moe were reading between drinks.

"Listen to this from Ad Hyman," chuckled the host. "Is it safe to risk Myrtle Sawyer in a leading role?" Ha! It should take an Injun Rajah to answer that! Only for Myrtle's sake and yours, Joe, I could wish Jimmy had boosted her for a Bernhardt."

Lord shook his head with a grin. "I warned him to beware of a blue eyed woman who had recently come into his life and said the home office had got wise. Told him they were sending out an efficiency man to cut overhead and it meant her job or his. But Donaldson will put an end to Miss Sawyer's future, anyhow."

"Say! What did you pull on her?" Ginsberg inquired. "I never heard such a screech."

"She's been getting candy through the mails for a month—some nutty fan, of course—but I told her it came from Ad and he intended to poison her so as to put Myrtle in opposite Thorndyke. Well, candy is poison to Miriam. Another five pounds and she'll be too fat to get over. While we were shooting 'The Bride of Hate,' she ate a box of Turkish paste and her liver went bad. It cost us six thousand dollars. Of course I didn't know she and Bush were married—that was pure luck. I'll bet they'll be back on our lot in a week."

"It looks like a big night's work for you," Joe Thomas told his host, "with Madame Turin eager to cancel and hurry to Paris while there is yet time to save her voice and the future of Grand Opera, and with the Passion Flower wedded to Gins-Art for life, not to mention the others! Some of them spoke so low I was afraid the dictaphone wouldn't pick up their voices."

"I didn't catch everything they said," Lord confessed, "but after Donaldson did her flop they were ready to take anything."

"What made you call Red Courtney?" Ginsberg inquired of the director.

"He's married to a rotten sequence in his last script and I thought I'd clean it up, for my own sake."

"Maybe you told him five hundred dollars was too much for a bum original?" Sol beamed hopefully.

"Say, you're in luck that nobody wandered downstairs and found Apple and me with that wireless rig and these written questions!"

Apple agreed to this. "Sure! A lot of 'em came here to kid the thing and they'd have done it, too, only for Joe's thought transference. That one had me going and I don't know yet how he did it."

"Don't you fellows believe in anything except alcoholic spirits?" Joe grinned and put a new "collar" on his glass.

Ginsberg shook his head positively. "After tonight, spirits, with me, runs in the end book."

"Well, there is a bright bellboy at the Ambassador and I hired him to stay in

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By HECTOR FULLER

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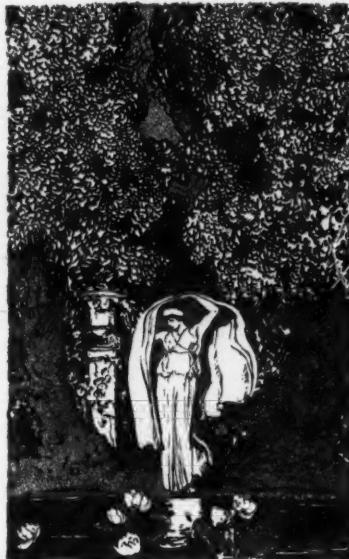
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my room. With him I left a list of names—two columns. The first column contained ten given names, like John, Henry, George and so on, and each name was numbered; the second column was made up of ten family names, Adams, Murphy, Graves, Johnson, similarly numbered. When Hyman asked for Henry Graves, the boy looked at his list. Henry was two, Graves was three. He read my mind and knew I was thinking of twenty-three. It was as simple as Moe's conjurer's bag with the double pocket and the duplicate envelopes. That is an old gag but I couldn't think of any better way to get those questions into Jimmy's hands."

"Tse! Tse!" Ginsberg clucked and shook his head. "It's a shame you should waste such brains on the electric business."

Moe Apple was examining the turban Joe had worn. He looked up to say: "Wasted, is it? And him with the patents granted for his new coil and this head set. It's too bad you won't have a piece of his royalties to waste on pictures. The first time I looked at that vase, I'll say it foaled me. I had to run a wire up the spout to detect the amplifier."

Thomas was of a similar mind. "Yes, if I've cured Myrtle of the movie habit I won't consider my brains wasted. 'Fragrant Myrtle Thomas, the Wonder Wife' I'll be around in the morning, Sol, and rip the wiring out of your library."

It was a week later. Joe Thomas looked up from a magazine as his wife spoke his name. Outside the car windows the desert was gliding past.

"Yes, dearie?"

"Are you getting tired of me already?"

"Why, sweetheart, I'm in Heaven." The groom leaned forward and kissed her pouting lips.

"I didn't know. You haven't said anything nice for—ever so long. And Joe! You'll never tell anybody what a miserable failure I was in pictures?"

"Nonsense. Who says you were a failure?"

A moment passed, then Mr. Thomas was again interrupted. "What are you reading, pettie?"

"One of those articles about spirits. It's great."

"Surely you don't believe in such things?"

"Of course I do. There are certain phenomena of nature—"

"You're one of them, dear." Mrs. Thomas favored her husband with an adoring gaze. "You're better looking than any of those leading men and I'm going to be frightfully jealous." The speaker ran her fingers through her husband's head of wavy midnight hair and he grinned fatuously at her compliment. "Poor, hard working Joe!" Again the pouting lips invited him. "This trip must have cost a fortune! And we could have spent the money for furniture!"

"Nothing like it, honey! You see I wired Ginsberg's house for him while I was in Los Angeles and he gave me a tip to buy Gins-Art stock. The trip hasn't cost a cent."

The name of Frank R. Adams stands for stories with a delectable human touch. "Super-People," in February COSMOPOLITAN, is one of the best he has ever written.

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